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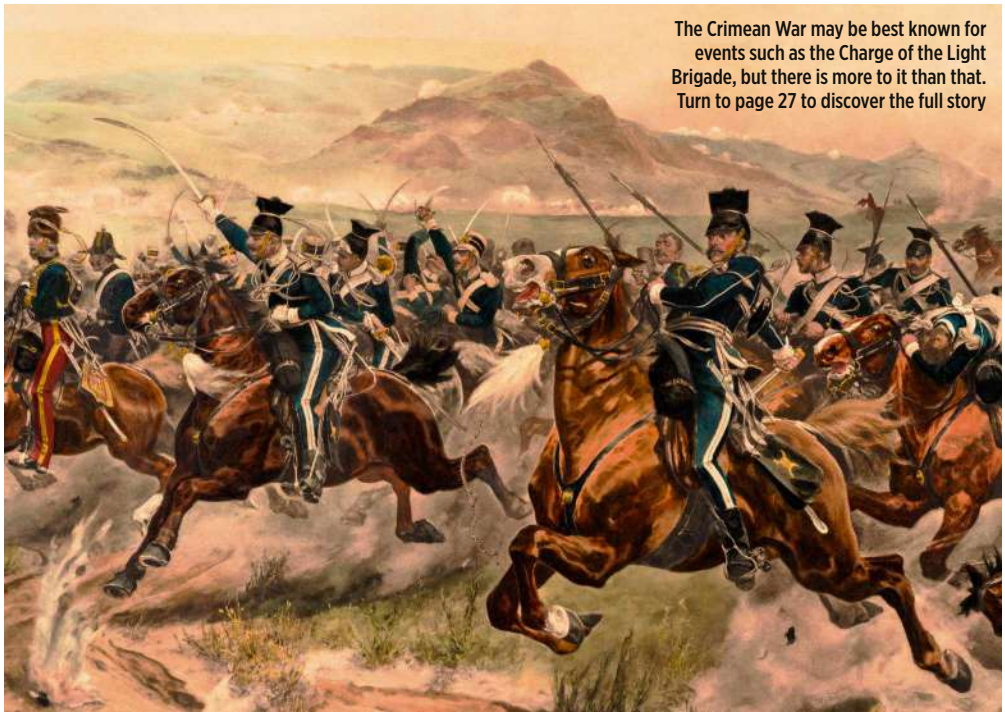
WELCOME JANUARY 2023



The Crimean War may be best known for events such as the Charge of the Light Brigade, but there is more to it than that. Turn to page 27 to discover the full story

The Crimean War – fought between Russia and an alliance of Britain, France, Turkey and Sardinia in the mid-19th century – is widely regarded as the first 'modern' war. From telegraphs and steamships, to weaponry and care of the wounded, a host of innovations were brought to the battlefield, ushering warfare into a new age. **In this month's Essential Guide, we've enlisted the help of Professor Andrew Lambert, who takes us through the fascinating story behind the conflict** – from the road to war and key battles, to the impact of household names such as Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole. Turn to page 27 to get started.

Elsewhere, we talk to **award-winning poet Raymond Antrobus, whose recent BBC World Service documentary saw him travel to Sierra Leone** to trace the lost story of a nameless deaf man freed from slavery in the 19th century (*page 51*). **We also explore the lives of 11 inked individuals from history,** examining how attitudes to tattooing have changed over time (*page 59*), and ask how the world might have looked had Argentina won the Falklands War in 1982 (*page 64*).

Plus, we'll also be investigating **the sinister tale of Elizabeth Báthory, a 16th-century Hungarian countess and alleged serial killer** (*page 20*), and take a look at why crossing the River Rubicon in 49 BC saw Julius Caesar start a civil war (*page 14*).

A happy New Year to all our readers. See you next month!

Charlotte Hodgman
Editor

Charlotte

THIS MONTH'S BIG NUMBERS

74
The duration (in days) of the Falklands War, fought between Britain and Argentina in 1982

>300
The number of girls said to have been murdered by Hungarian countess Elizabeth Báthory

111
The number of Victoria Crosses that were awarded to veterans of the Crimean War

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COVER FIGURES, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, SERGEANT WILLIAM MCGREGOR OF THE SCOTS FUSILIERS GUARDS, MARY SEACOLE, NICHOLAS I-ALAMY X3, GETTY IMAGES X5 ON THIS PAGE: ALAMY X1, JENI NOTT X1

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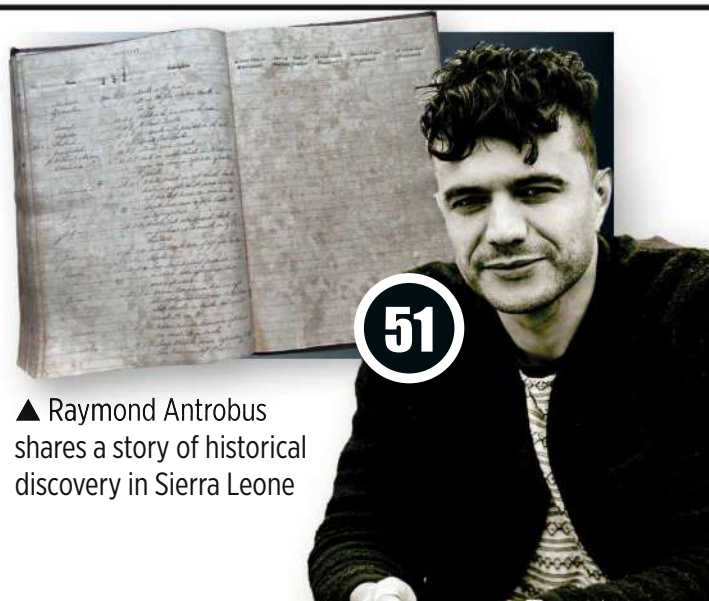

▲ Raymond Antrobus shares a story of historical discovery in Sierra Leone

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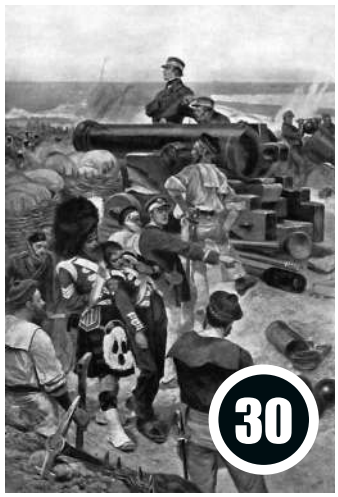
◀ Learn how the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole changed the treatment of wounded soldiers forever

▲ Why religion played a key role in triggering the conflict

▲ Meet the war's major players and decision-makers

▲ Find out how the war was impacted by new technology



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SNAPSHOTS

c1860
WOOLLY DISPLAY

Is that an elephant in the room? Well, not quite. While sharing similarities with modern-day pachyderms, the beast shown in this mid-19th century photograph is in fact a woolly mammoth, excavated from the permafrost of Siberia and displayed to awestruck visitors at St Petersburg Museum. Siberia has certainly provided its fair share of woolly mammoths over the centuries, with the first recorded example being uncovered in 1799 near the delta of the Lena River. But, when institutions first began exhibiting the creatures, they mistakenly displayed them with their tusks pointing outwards; in fact, they were naturally inclined inwards. St Petersburg still boasts the world's largest museum collection of mammoth remains to this day, from calves to fully mature adults.

GETTY IMAGES

SNAPSHOTS

1967
RAISING RED FLAGS

Roused by Chairman Mao's call to defend the People's Republic from 'internal traitors', a vibrant throng of Red Guards – a paramilitary organisation mostly made up of young students – surge past Beijing's Tiananmen Gate in 1967. Such overt displays of loyalty were vital for Maoist propaganda, helping the ageing dictator tighten his grip on power following the failure of his Great Leap Forward, an economic campaign that had resulted in tens of millions of people dying through famine. Keen to reassert his authority, Mao mobilised the nation's youth and encouraged them to attack the 'bourgeois' elements he accused of having infiltrated government and society. But this was only one part of the plan: by launching a full-blown Cultural Revolution, aimed at erasing China's 'Four Olds' (pre-communist ideas, customs, habits and culture), Mao believed he could truly reshape the nation in his image.

GETTY IMAGES

世界人民大团结万岁
光荣的正确的中国共产党万岁

SNAPSHOTS

1920s GATHERING STEAM

Many of us probably associate hot springs with bathing, but for the Māori people of New Zealand (or, to use its Indigenous name, Aotearoa), geothermal waters have also been used for cooking meals. In this 1920s snap taken in the Whakarewarewa Valley, a trio of Māori women demonstrate the age-old culinary practice by dangling pouches of food directly into a spring, or *waiariki*. Today, visitors to the valley – which features a 'living village' dedicated to preserving traditional Māori culture – can sample such cooking as part of a wider ideal known as *manaakitanga*, centred on kindness and providing good hospitality for your guests.

GETTY IMAGES

THINGS WE LEARNED THIS MONTH

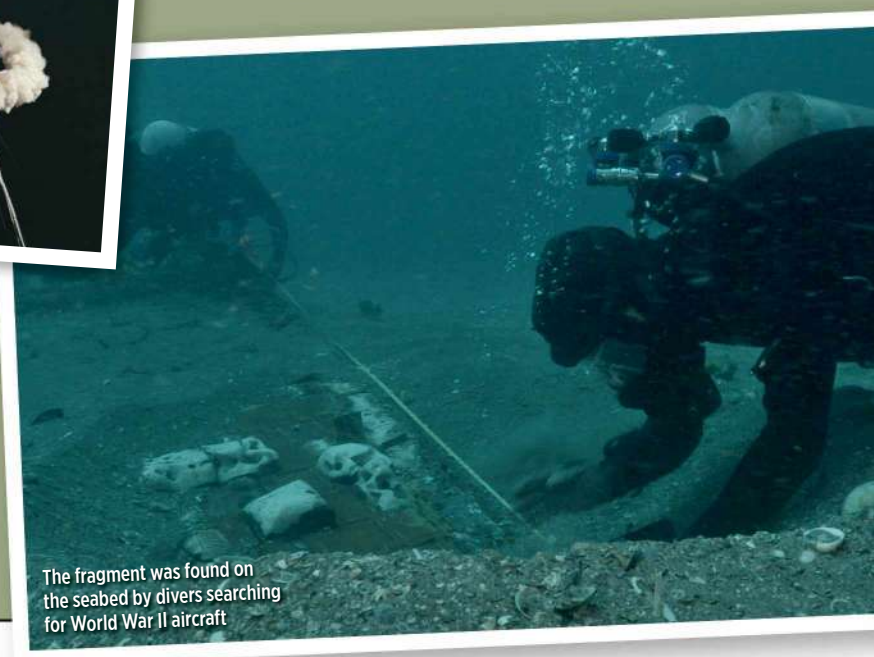
RECENT HISTORY HEADLINES THAT CAUGHT OUR EYE

MAIN: ***Challenger*** **first entered service in 1983, completing nine successful missions and setting new records for human space flight**

RIGHT: **The space shuttle's demise was witnessed by millions of US children, who had been watching a broadcast of the launch at school**

SPACE SHUTTLE REMAINS DISCOVERED IN THE ATLANTIC

Divers searching for the wreckage of World War II aircraft off Florida's east coast have inadvertently found a piece of debris from the ill-fated *Challenger* space shuttle. The discovery, made during the filming of a programme for the History Channel, broke off the shuttle when it exploded 73 seconds after lift-off from NASA's Kennedy Space Centre on 28 January 1986. The doomed launch – which was seen by television viewers around the world – resulted in the deaths of all seven people on board, including 37-year-old Christa McAuliffe, who had been due to become the first teacher in space.



The fragment was found on the seabed by divers searching for World War II aircraft

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COOKING EMERGED EARLIER THAN PREVIOUSLY THOUGHT

Humans were tucking into cooked food many hundreds of thousands of years earlier than previously thought, say researchers. Analysis of tooth enamel from the 780,000-year-old remains of fish found at the Gesher Benot Ya'aqov archaeological site in Israel (like the specimen above) has indicated that the animals were heated using a controlled fire source. Prior to the discovery, the oldest-known examples of cooking by humans were believed to be around 170,000 years old.

COULD STATUE BE A VOTE-WINNER?

A bronze statue of the 16th-century chieftain Kempegowda, founder of Bengaluru (formerly Bangalore), has been unveiled at the city's international airport. Funded by public money, installation of the 33-metre-tall sculpture has been interpreted by some observers as an attempt by India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, to bolster support for his Bharatiya Janata Party ahead of local elections in 2023. Kempegowda remains a highly revered figure in Bengaluru and the wider state of Karnataka, particularly among members of the Vokkaliga community, to which the chieftain belonged.

HAND POINTS TO LANGUAGE ORIGINS

A flat bronze hand unearthed in northern Spain in 2021 could help unlock the origins of the Basque language, claim experts. Dubbed the 'Hand of Irulegi', the ancient talisman – which is inscribed with a series of mysterious characters – was made over 2,000 years ago by a late Iron Age tribe known as the Vascones. Although the Vascones were thought to have lacked a proper written language, academic researchers now believe that the only currently identifiable word on the hand – *sorioneku* – is likely the origin of the Basque term *zorioneko*, meaning 'good fortune'.

166

The number of pre-Hispanic artefacts, mostly of Maya origin, recently found inside a car being driven by a US man and woman stopped by the police in Guatemala

DIVERS LOCATE SWEDISH SHIPWRECK

The long-lost sister ship of the 17th-century Swedish vessel *Vasa* has been found by marine archaeologists. The wreck of *Äpplet* was located by staff from the Swedish Museum of Wrecks near the island of Vaxholm in December 2021, although the discovery was only publicly announced in October 2022. Unlike *Vasa*, which sank upon launch, *Äpplet* enjoyed three decades of service, before being scuttled in 1659 to create an underwater rampart to protect Stockholm from seaborne attack. In 2019, archaeologists identified two other wrecks in the same area dating from 1648.

Julius Caesar crosses the Rubicon

Words: Danny Bird

By 49 BC, Gaius Julius Caesar had amassed enormous power, prestige and fortune in the Roman Republic, and, with his conquest of Gaul, enshrined his name as a great military commander with enduring loyalty from his soldiers. His political instincts and voracious quest for glory instilled in him a determination to reshape the Greco-Roman world anew. Yet by capitalising on the Republic's fragility, Caesar made enemies, and it would be his decision at a small river called the Rubicon that would seal the fate of Rome.

A decade earlier, he had served his year-long term as one of two consuls, the most senior public office in the Republic, after helping forge the First Triumvirate, a political alliance with the famously rich Marcus Licinius Crassus and the esteemed general Pompey, who also became Caesar's son-in-law. Caesar's role as consul had been instrumental in securing the Triumvirate's mutual ambitions, notably Pompey's request that public land be allotted to veterans of his military campaigns.

Traditionally, the next appointment for a consul was a governorship over a colonial province, and Caesar assumed command of Cisalpine Gaul (modern northern Italy), from where he launched an audacious conquest beyond the Alps. Within a decade, Caesar had extended his authority over all of Gaul (a huge region of northwestern Europe that today includes France), traversed the Rhine, and landed in Britannia.

The savagery of Gaul's subjugation had, by Caesar's boasts, resulted in the slaughter of a million people and the enslavement of a million more. News of these feats filtered into Rome and won Caesar much praise among its citizens.

MAIN: **Caesar's bold move plunged the Roman world into chaos and autocracy**

ABOVE: **A bust of Caesar's son-in-law, Pompey, who became a sworn enemy**

> "Caesar's gamble that day in January 49 BC has continued to cast a long shadow over world politics"

Crucially, however, the campaign had never been authorised by the Senate. Now, his adversaries set out to prosecute him for war crimes and looked to the new consul, Pompey, to bring the wayward man to heel. The Senate decreed in early January 49 BC that if Caesar did not relinquish his command, he would be declared a public enemy. This ultimatum forced his hand.

"THE DIE IS CAST"

Around 10 January, Caesar gathered his battle-hardened soldiers from Legio XIII Gemina, or the 13th Twin Legion, along the bank of a shallow river in northern Italy. This was the Rubicon, the course of which marked the frontier between Rome and Cisalpine Gaul. For a Roman army to ford this river southward would be a transgression so profound as to ignite a civil war and render the offending party as outlaws.

While the legionaries waited, their commander, Caesar, pondered the weight of the decision before him. If he did as the Senate demanded, he would lose everything; if he crossed the river at the head of an army, it would lead to an all-or-nothing fight for ultimate power

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X4

A painting depicts the surrender of the Gallic king Vercingetorix. Caesar's conquest of Gaul was a springboard for his seizure of power in Rome

of Rome. Caesar, brimming with pride and hubris, knew it was a fight he could win. His mind was made up. Still conscious of the tremendous gamble he was about to undertake, though, Caesar reputedly quoted his favourite Greek playwright, Menander, while crossing the Rubicon: *Alea iacta est* ('the die is cast').

With this simple act of defiance, the Roman world was plunged into civil war. Several days later, news of the invasion reached Rome and struck panic into its citizens. Pompey took flight, ordering the Roman aristocracy to abandon the capital and regroup in southeast Italy. Nevertheless, Caesar continued to sweep down the Italian peninsula, driving his enemies overseas.

TWILIGHT OF THE REPUBLIC

Pompey and Caesar's armies clashed across Rome's far-flung provinces until a decisive showdown at the battle of Pharsalus in Greece, a year and a half after the Rubicon. Pompey was defeated and forced to flee, seeking refuge in Egypt. Upon his arrival, he was murdered by agents of pharaoh Ptolemy XIII. Eager to curry favour with Caesar, they presented him with Pompey's head, but Caesar was horrified at what had befallen his one-time ally and gave orders for the assassins to be executed.

Caesar then wintered in Alexandria, helping to resolve a dynastic dispute between Ptolemy and his sister-wife, Cleopatra VII. The Egyptian queen and the Roman statesman became lovers and welcomed a son, Caesarion, in 47 BC. Caesar spent the next two years pursuing the last of his enemies across Africa and Hispania. By 44 BC, he was victorious at last and proclaimed himself *dictator perpetuo* (dictator for life).

Nevertheless, on the Ides of March (15 March) that same year, Caesar was assassinated in Rome by a group of senators, appalled by his monarchical pretensions. His death provoked another civil war, one that brought an end to the Republic and saw it transition to hereditary one-man rule under Caesar's named heir, his great nephew: the first emperor, Augustus.

The crossing of the Rubicon proved to be a watershed in western history. Republicanism and the freedoms associated with the ancient city-states would not be seen again in Europe until the High Middle Ages. Caesar's gamble that day in January 49 BC has continued to cast a long shadow over world politics ever since.

DID YOU KNOW?

UNCHARTED WATERS

'Crossing the Rubicon' is a common phrase used to describe a point of no return, yet the river's precise location was long lost to history. It wasn't until 1933 that the Fiumicino was identified as being the river of antiquity, and its old name was swiftly restored.

READ
Learn more about the life and legacy of Julius Caesar on the *HistoryExtra* website: *historyextra.com/caesar-facts*

OTHER ANNIVERSARIES

A LOOK BACK AT OTHER EVENTS THAT HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN JANUARY THROUGHOUT HISTORY

2 January 1492

ISLAMIC SPAIN COMES TO AN END

After a decade of war, the Emirate of Granada capitulates to Isabella I of Castille and Ferdinand II of Aragon, bringing an end to centuries of Islamic rule on the Iberian Peninsula. Muhammad XII becomes the last sultan of the Nasrid dynasty, surrendering the city of Granada and his fortified palace, the Alhambra. An era of religious persecution begins, with Jews and Muslims forced to convert to Christianity or face expulsion.

18 January 1871

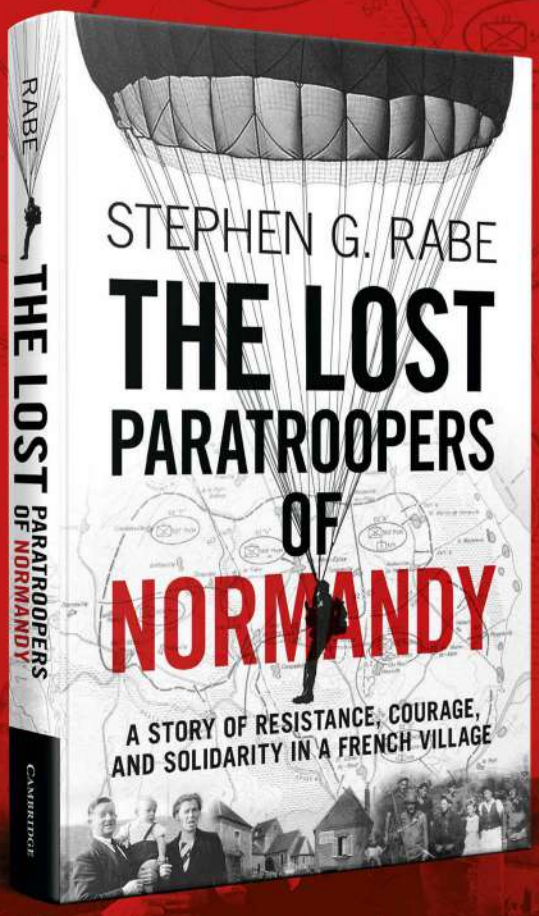
GERMANY IS UNIFIED

King Wilhelm I of Prussia is proclaimed kaiser of the newly formed German empire inside the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles (*pictured right*). War with Napoleon III's French empire in 1870 had provided an opportunity for the Prussian chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, to fulfil his efforts to unify the numerous German states into a single nation. Paris is under Prussian siege while the ceremony unfolds, and the Hall of Mirrors becomes a lasting scene of enmity between France and Germany.

28 January 1813

AUSTEN'S BESTSELLER GOES ON SALE

Pride and Prejudice is published in three volumes, with its author only identified as being the same as that of *Sense and Sensibility*: "a Lady". Jane Austen and her publisher, Thomas Egerton, are stunned by her novel's success when its first run of 1,500 copies quickly sells out. Later that year, a second issue is released.



STEPHEN G. RABE

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MARK A. STOLER, author of *Allies in War: Britain and America against the Axis Powers, 1940–1945*

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THE HISTORY DETECTIVE

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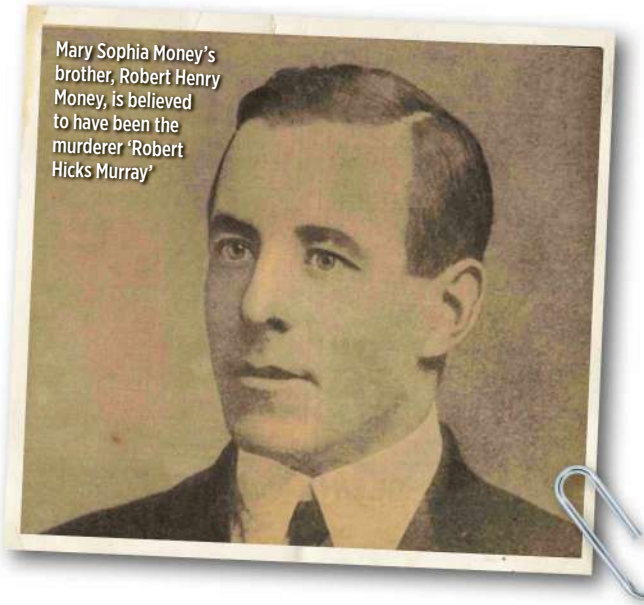
CASE #005

THE MONEY MURDERS

DID ROBERT HENRY MONEY MURDER HIS SISTER BEFORE KILLING HIS IFE AND CHILDREN SEVEN YEARS LATER? DR NELL DARBY EXAMINES THE POSSIBLE CONNECTIONS BET EEN T O TRAGIC ED ARDIAN CASES

When one member of a family is killed in horrible circumstances, that is a tragedy. But in the case of the Money family, when a second member died seven years later – killing four others along the way – it raised questions about who might have killed Mary Sophia Money, and how appearances can be very deceptive.

Mary Sophia Money was a young woman who was highly thought of by those who knew her. The youngest of 10 children, she had been named after her eldest sister, who had died aged 13. This ominous naming did not stop her from being a cheerful soul, who enjoyed her work as bookkeeper at a south London dairy, and had many friends. She was particularly close to the sibling next in age to her – her older brother Robert Henry Money.



Mary Sophia Money's brother, Robert Henry Money, is believed to have been the murderer 'Robert Hicks Murray'

The fire-damaged house in Eastbourne where 'Murray' carried out his heinous crime

Her death was both untimely and horrific. On the night of 24 September 1905, 21-year-old Mary had left work at Lavender Hill in the evening, saying she was just going for a short walk. The next day, though, she was found in a mile-long railway tunnel near Merstham in Surrey, having been hit by a train. Part of her white silk scarf was in her mouth, and she had fatal head injuries. The jury at the subsequent inquest could not decide how Mary died – whether by suicide, accident or murder – and the police publicly admitted they could not solve the case.

FAMILY ANNIHILATION

Seven years later, in 1912, a woman named Florence Paler ran out of a burning house in Eastbourne, East Sussex, having been shot twice in the neck. Inside the house were found her lover – Robert Hicks Murray – and their two children. Florence's sister Edith Matilda, who was Robert's wife, and their child, were also dead. Robert had shot them all before setting a fire and then shooting himself.

When a sample of Murray's handwriting appeared in the newspapers, one woman immediately recognised it as belonging to her brother – Robert Henry Money. When 'Murray' had got married, he had given his father's name as James William, and this was the name of Money's father. Murray and Money also both had the same initials. But if it was Robert Money who had committed this family annihilation, his family had no idea about his double life. They knew him, as his sister Charlotte said, as a "straightforward, honest, sober and good-tempered man."

Shortly after the deaths, an unmarried female servant living opposite the 'Murrays' killed her newborn child, having allegedly gone insane as a result of the shootings.

Perhaps she had been in a relationship with her priapic neighbour, and her pregnancy was one complication too much for him. An alternative theory was that Robert Money – if it was him – had killed his sister back in 1905 and could not live any longer with his guilt. Her siblings, though, said that Robert Money had been the man to identify his sister's mangled body, and that the shock of this may have never left him. What was really the truth about Mary Sophia's death, and Robert's involvement in it, still remains unknown.

DR NELL DARBY is a crime historian and writer, and the presenter of the CBS Reality series *Murder by the Sea*. Her latest book is *Sister Sleuths: Female Detectives in Britain* (Pen & Sword History, 2021)

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The Manhattan Project

Words: Danny Bird

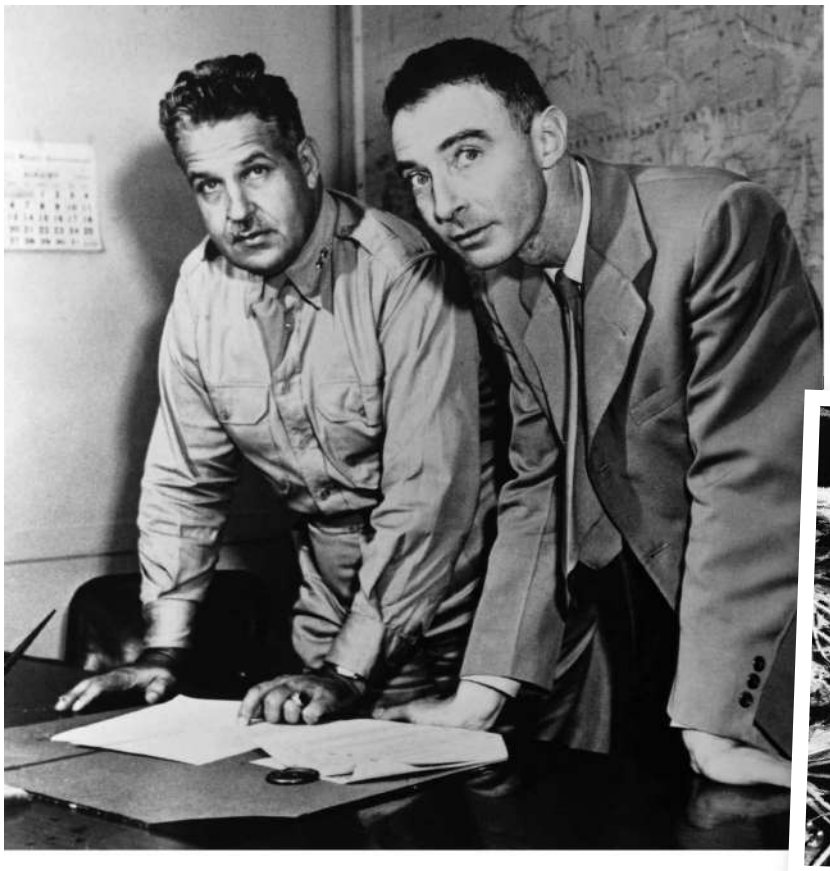
WHAT WAS THE MANHATTAN PROJECT AND HOW DID IT COME ABOUT?

Initiated in the summer of 1942, the Manhattan Project was the codename for the US-led research project into developing the world's first atomic bomb.

The possibility that such a weapon could be created had first become apparent following the discovery in 1938 of nuclear fission by scientists based in Berlin. Fearing the Nazis would soon harness the breakthrough for their own ends, renowned physicist Albert Einstein signed a letter written by his colleague, Leo Szilard, urging US president Franklin D Roosevelt to fund new research into uranium – the heaviest naturally occurring element in the periodic table. The discovery of nuclear fission had revealed that when a neutron particle impacts the isotope uranium-235, it splits and triggers an exponential chain reaction, unleashing a huge amount of energy. Persuaded by the letter, Roosevelt authorised the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Uranium, which was later subsumed into the National Defense Research Committee (NDRC) in June 1940.

Meanwhile, across the Atlantic, two Jewish émigrés from Nazi Germany to Britain – physicists Otto Frisch and Rudolf Peierls – estimated that the fissile material needed to sustain a chain reaction within a hypothetical bomb would be small enough for conveyance by aeroplane. Worried that the Nazis might draw the same conclusions, the duo sent a memorandum to the British government, making it clear that a "super-bomb" would yield an explosion powerful enough to devastate an entire city, equivalent to approximately 1,000 tonnes of dynamite.

In January 1942, just over a month after Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor and America's entry into World War II, President Roosevelt secretly approved plans to create the world's first atomic bomb. Leslie Groves of the US Army Corps of Engineers was tasked with overseeing the construction of the laboratories and factories needed to fulfil the objective, and in August, the Manhattan Project was born. Despite being named after the New York borough where its headquarters was initially located, the project's operations quickly expanded to other US locations.



LEFT: **The close partnership between the project's director, Leslie Groves (*left*), and its lead scientist, J Robert Oppenheimer (*right*), proved vital to its ultimate success**

BELOW: **Uranium-235 used in the bomb dropped over Hiroshima on 6 August 1945 was isolated at a facility in Oak Ridge, Tennessee**

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

WHO WORKED ON THE MANHATTAN PROJECT?

A colossal endeavour, the project not only mobilised the country's leading scientists, but countless other workers spanning a variety of expertise. At its peak, it is estimated that roughly 130,000 individuals were involved.

Known as the 'father' of the atomic bomb, Julius Robert Oppenheimer is perhaps the project's most famous figure today. Briefed with weaponising atomic energy, the physicist was chosen to head up the project's secret research

laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Prior to taking up the post, he had carried out research into the quantity of radioactive material that would be required to make an atomic weapon, and how destructive it might be. Such insight proved indispensable to the project's ultimate success.

Meanwhile, Klaus Fuchs is arguably the Manhattan Project's most notorious individual. A German physicist and refugee to Britain, it would later transpire that he had been passing information to the Soviets throughout his involvement with the project. In fact, his espionage may have enabled the Kremlin to develop the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb in 1949 – one year sooner than would have otherwise been the case.

Another interesting figure connected to the project is Leona Woods. Aged just 23 at its inception, she was both the youngest and the only female member of the team involved in building the world's first-ever artificial nuclear reactor, Chicago Pile-1. She later oversaw construction of the reactors used to produce plutonium for the project.

WHAT KEY LOCATIONS WERE INVOLVED IN THE PROJECT?

The quest to create an atomic bomb was a mammoth effort, with the University of Chicago and the University of California, Berkeley being among the key institutions involved. Alongside research into uranium, a new element – plutonium – had been discovered at Berkeley in 1940. Like uranium-235, scientists discovered that two of its isotopes were fissile, and it thus became central to the project's outcome.

Besides the laboratory at Los Alamos, new weapons facilities were also created at Oak Ridge, Tennessee and Hanford, Washington, while major US corporations like Union Carbide and DuPont were tasked with building and maintaining infrastructure and machinery in coordination with the US Army. Oak Ridge's role was to extract enough explosive component (uranium-235) to make a viable weapon, while Hanford hosted enormous reactors designed to produce plutonium. In addition, uranium – the fuel that powered the reactors – came from natural deposits located in Colorado, Canada and the Belgian Congo.

ABOVE LEFT: **A replica of 'Fat Man' – the plutonium bomb that the US detonated over the city of Nagasaki on 9 August 1945**

ABOVE CENTRE: **The vast mushroom cloud that resulted from the 'Trinity' test in New Mexico on 16 July 1945**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Reduced to rubble, Hiroshima's fate demonstrated the apocalyptic potential of the new weapons**

> "An incandescent flash banished the night, followed by an immense fireball that cooled into a soaring mushroom cloud, 7.5 miles tall"

WHEN DID THE FIRST TEST OF AN ATOMIC BOMB OCCUR?

Just before dawn on 16 July 1945, a plutonium device was detonated in the Jornada del Muerto desert, New Mexico. An incandescent flash banished the night, followed by an immense fireball that cooled into a soaring mushroom cloud, 7.5 miles tall. Gathered at a safe distance, witnesses felt the heat blast to be oven-like. The 'Trinity' test, as it was named, left a profound impression on its architects. Oppenheimer, reflecting some years later, said it reminded him of a verse in a sacred Hindu text, the *Bhagavad Gita*: "Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds". The atomic age had well and truly begun.

WHAT WERE THE MANHATTAN PROJECT'S CONSEQUENCES?

Days before the Potsdam Declaration (an Allied ultimatum demanding Japan's surrender), 70 Manhattan Project scientists petitioned the new US president Harry Truman to consider the "obligation of restraint" such weaponry elicited. They reminded him that Germany's defeat rendered the original purpose behind the bomb's creation obsolete, but their letter – dated 17 July 1945 – never reached him.

On 6 August, *Enola Gay*, a B-29 bomber, dropped 'Little Boy' – an untested uranium-235 device – over the Japanese city of Hiroshima, which exploded 580 metres above the ground. Around 70,000 people were killed outright, with the resulting radiation claiming lives for decades afterwards. Two-thirds of the city was destroyed instantly. Three days later, 'Fat Man', a duplicate of the Trinity bomb, exploded over Nagasaki, killing between 60,000 and 80,000 people. Japan surrendered on 15 August, and World War II formally came to an end on 2 September.

The subsequent Cold War was defined by a nuclear arms race between the US and the Soviet Union, leading to a policy of mutual assured destruction (MAD) and a worldwide peace movement calling for nuclear disarmament. Nearly 80 years since their destruction, debate still rages around the morality of targeting Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as well as the risk that nuclear weapons continue to pose to this day.

READ
Historian Diana Preston traces the story behind the science and politics of the Manhattan Project on the *HistoryExtra* website: *historyextra.com/manhattan-project*

Elizabeth Báthory: 17th-century 'serial killer'

The Hungarian countess Elizabeth Báthory is said to have murdered hundreds of girls and bathed in their blood to keep herself beautiful. But is there any truth in the gory story, or is it just a malicious lie?

In the first decade of the 17th century, some disturbing claims swirled around the Kingdom of Hungary: of young girls' disappearances, of torture and of murder. At the centre of them all was one woman accused of wanton cruelty and sadism, a countess named Elizabeth Báthory. Seemingly, she targeted poor girls from the local villages, either by kidnapping or luring them to her many castles with the promise of work.

Nothing was initially done about this, however, not least since the victims were mere peasants, while Báthory was wealthy, intelligent and powerful. Born on 7 August 1560 into Protestant nobility, her family held dominion over Transylvania, a de facto independent principality within the kingdom (modern-day Romania), with her uncle Stephen Báthory ruling as prince as well as king of Poland and grand duke of Lithuania.

So, Báthory remained at liberty at Čachtice Castle, her domineering, Gothic pile on top of a hillside that had been a wedding present. In 1575, when still a teenager, she had been married to Count Ferenc Nádasdy, himself a member of a major aristocratic dynasty who went on to command the Hungarian army in wars against the Ottoman empire, and the couple had five known children together. It was after Nádasdy's death in 1604 that the whispers and fears regarding Báthory began to proliferate.

That was also when her heinous crimes – torture and murder – intensified. Báthory, it was said, took pleasure in a catalogue of gruesome acts: stabbing victims under the fingernails with needles; cutting, burning, even biting their flesh; beating and starving them to death; leaving them outside to freeze, or covering them with honey so they would be attacked by insects. It was said she had a purpose-built torture chamber, and that she associated with witches.

Still, it was only after the allegations suggested that her victims had started to include young noble girls that they were taken seriously. Báthory supposedly invited daughters of the gentry to attend a form of finishing school at her castles (finishing being the operative word). Eventually, the count palatine of Hungary, György Thurzó, was ordered to investigate and he took dozens of witness statements. He reached the conclusion that Báthory had killed at least 80 girls; although that may have been a fraction of the total number, which is said to have been more than 300.

A c1600 portrait of Elizabeth Báthory. The noblewoman's alleged crimes have led her to be dubbed 'Countess Dracula'

CASTLE INCARCERATION

On 29 December 1610, Thurzó had Báthory and four of her servants arrested. Her accomplices confessed and were put on trial, with three being executed and the last imprisoned for life, but she never stood trial for her crimes. Her noble status and the scandal that could have ensued convinced Thurzó to have her confined within Čachtice Castle instead. There, reportedly in rooms that had been completely walled up with only small slits to allow food to be passed through, she saw out the final few years of her life. Báthory was found dead, aged 54, on 21 August 1614.

If everything said about Báthory was true then she certainly deserves her reputation as the most prolific female serial killer in history. That is the title bestowed upon her by Guinness World Records. Today, she is also remembered essentially as a vampire, since a part of her legacy is that she would drink the blood of her victims as a means of preserving her youth. For that, she has sometimes been referred to as 'Countess Dracula'.

But there is another possibility: Báthory was innocent and herself a victim of obscene accusations by those wishing to get rid of her or seize her money and lands, and it was from those machinations that her terrifying reputation grew. To this day, the most notorious detail about Báthory is that she actually bathed in the blood of virgins in a bid for eternal life – but that was an addition to her legend more than a century after her death.

TWISTING THE TRUTH

Recent scholarship has suggested that political rivalries, familial greed and pervasive misogyny helped fuel the many rumours instigating her arrest. Her sons-in-law looked to take control of her estates, while the Hungarian king owed Báthory a significant debt so wasted no time in having that expunged. Most of Thurzó's witness statements, it turned out, were not based on first-hand information; her servants' confessions had been extracted under torture; and the huge death toll was said to have been based on a list Báthory kept, but was never found.

The truth remains far from certain. Complaints about Báthory's cruelty and violent proclivities had come years before her arrest after all, and not from a rival but a Lutheran minister named István Magyari. It seems, at least, plausible that she was guilty of a degree of sadistic behaviour – a callous treatment of the lower classes, for example, in the not entirely mistaken belief that her noble status protected her. To maintain that she tortured, brutalised and murdered hundreds of girls, let alone that she performed acts that could be described as vampiric, is quite another matter.

WORDS: JONNY WILKES

GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X3

"Recent scholarship has suggested that political rivalries, familial greed and pervasive misogyny helped fuel the many rumours surrounding her arrest"

A purported portrait of Elizabeth Báthory as a young woman, c1580. Suggestions that she drank and bathed in the blood of her victims may be fabrications, spread by political rivals with ulterior motives

RIGHT: **The ruins of Čachtice Castle, in modern-day Slovakia, where Bathory is said to have carried out her gruesome deeds**

CENTRE RIGHT: **A depiction of Bathory's husband, Count Ferenc Nádasdy, whom she married while still in her teens**

FAR RIGHT: **György Thurzó, shown here lying in his coffin following his death in 1616, ordered the arrest of the countess and her accomplices**

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7 THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE HISTORY OF COFFEE

Paul Chrystal shares seven facts about the discovery of coffee and Britain's long love affair with the 'sinful' beverage...

1 COFFEE MAY HAVE BEEN DISCOVERED BY 'EXCITED GOATS'

Legend has it that Kaldi, a lonely goat herder in ninth-century AD Ethiopia, discovered the energising and invigorating effects of coffee when he saw his goats getting excited after eating some berries from a tree. Kaldi told the abbot of the local monastery about this, and the abbot came up with the idea of drying and boiling the berries to make a beverage. He threw the berries into the fire, whence the unmistakable aroma of what we now know as coffee drifted through the night air. The now roasted beans were raked from the embers, ground up and dissolved in hot water: so was made the world's first cup of coffee.

The abbot and his monks found that the beverage kept them awake for hours at a time – just the thing for men devoted to long hours of prayer. Word spread, and so did the hot drink, even as far afield as the Arabian peninsula.

A Yemenite Sufi mystic named Ghothul Akbar Nooruddin Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili also has a claim to the discovery of coffee: he is said to have spotted berry-eating birds flying over his village unusually energetically. On tasting some jettisoned berries, he too found himself unusually alert.

GETTY IMAGES X8

2 IT WAS BREWED BY A SAINT FROM MOCHA

An alternative story has us believe that coffee was first discovered by a sheik named Omar, disciple to the Sufi mystic cited in the previous box. While in exile from Mocha (Arabia Felix in present-day Yemen), Omar, who was famous for his ability to cure the sick through prayer, lived in a desert cave near Ousab.

Somewhat hungry, Omar one day chewed some berries only to find them bitter. He roasted them but this only made them hard; finally, he tried boiling them, resulting in a fragrant brown liquid which, in an instant, gave him unnatural and exceptional energy and allowed him to stay awake for days on end. His 'miracle discovery' was held in such great awe that he was allowed to return home to Mocha and elevated to the sainthood while coffee percolated throughout the Arab world.

By the 16th century, coffee was the beverage of choice in Persia, Egypt, Syria and Turkey, its reputation as the 'wine of Araby' boosted no end by the thousands of pilgrims visiting the holy city of Mecca each year from all over the Muslim world. Yemeni merchants took coffee home from Ethiopia and began to grow it for themselves. It was prized by Sufis in Yemen who used the drink to aid concentration and as a spiritual intoxicant. They also used it to keep themselves alert during their night-time devotions.

From the Middle East the popularity of coffee spread through the Balkans, Italy and to the rest of Europe, east to Indonesia and then west to the Americas, through the Dutch.

An engraving shows Syrians enjoying local cafés on the banks of the Barrada River in Damascus

3 COFFEE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR A SOCIAL REVOLUTION

Coffee was so powerful a force that it forged a social revolution. Coffee was drunk in the home as a domestic beverage but, more significantly, it was also drunk in the ubiquitous public coffee houses – *qahveh khaneh* – which sprang up in villages, towns and cities across the Middle East and east Africa. These coffee houses soon became all the rage and were the place to go to socialise.

Coffee-drinking and conversation were complemented by all manner of entertainment: musical performances, dancing, games of chess and, most crucially, gossiping, arguing and discussing the breaking news of the day (or night). These coffee houses soon became known as 'schools of the wise' – the places that you went to if you wanted to know what was going on in your world. The link between coffee and intellectual life had been established.

Coffee houses, like this example in London, first became popular across the Middle East and east Africa

4 IT WAS BELIEVED THAT COFFEE WAS 'SINFUL'

Coffee, like alcohol, has a long history of prohibition, attracting fear and suspicion and religious disquiet and hypocrisy. Had the zealots (of all religions) got their way then there would not be very many coffee houses open today.

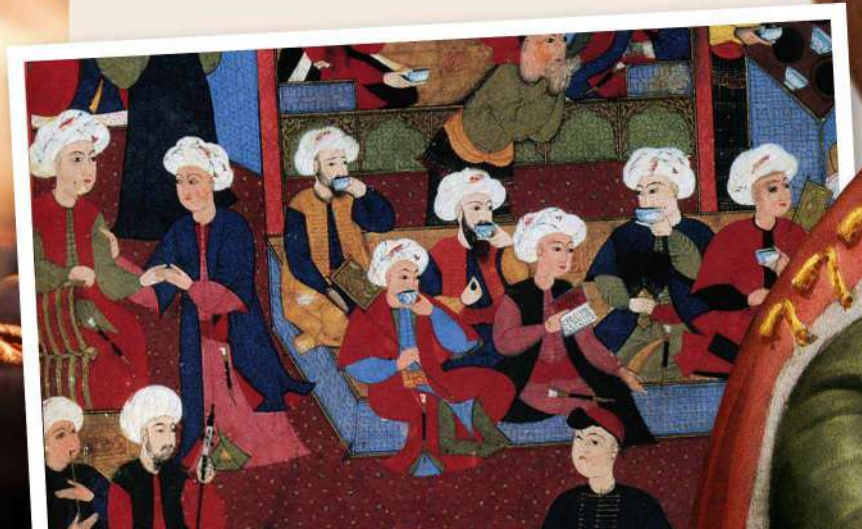
Coffee-drinking was banned by jurists and scholars meeting in Mecca in 1511. The opposition was led by the Meccan governor Khair Beg, who was afraid that coffee would foster opposition to his rule by bringing men together and allowing them to discuss his failings. Thus was born coffee's association with sedition and revolution.

It was decreed *haraam* (sinful), but the controversy over whether it was intoxicating or not raged on over the next 13 years until the ban was finally rescinded in 1524 by an order of the Ottoman Turkish Sultan Selim I, with Grand Mufti Mehmet Ebussuud el-İmadi issuing a fatwa allowing coffee to be drunk again. Beg was executed for his troubles by command of the sultan himself, who further proclaimed coffee to be sacred.

In Cairo there was a similar ban in 1532; coffee houses and coffee warehouses there were ransacked. ▶

RIGHT: **Selim I lifted the Ottoman empire's 13-year ban on coffee-drinking, declaring the caffeinated beverage to be sacred**

BELOW LEFT: **Patrons of Ottoman coffee houses gathered to chat, read books and play games – not unlike today**



5 COFFEE WAS KNOWN AS 'THE DEVIL'S CUP'

It did not take long for coffee to travel the short distance to the European mainland, where it was landed first in Venice on the back of the lucrative trade the city enjoyed with its Mediterranean neighbours. Initially, however, coffee was met with the suspicion and prejudice it had suffered in the Middle East and Turkey. The word on the street, filtering back from intrepid European travellers to the mysterious and mystical lands of the east, was of an equally mysterious, exotic and intoxicating liquor. To Catholics it was the 'bitter invention of Satan', carrying the whiff of Islam, and it seemed suspiciously like a substitute for wine as used in the Eucharist; in any event, it was outlawed.

Such was the consternation that Pope Clement VIII (*pictured*) had to intervene: he sampled coffee for himself and decreed that it was indeed a Christian as well as a Muslim drink. On tasting it he wittily declared: "This devil's drink is so delicious... we should cheat the devil by baptising it!" From then on, coffee has been dubbed the devil's drink, or the devil's cup.

6 COFFEE CAME TO ENGLAND IN THE MID-17TH CENTURY

According to Samuel Pepys, England's first coffee house was founded in Oxford in 1650 by a Jewish gentleman named Jacob, inside a building now known as The Grand Café. Meanwhile, London's first coffee house opened in 1652 in St Michael's Alley, near St Michael at Cornhill's churchyard. It was run by Pasqua Rosée, a Greek man who in 1672 also set up a coffee stall in Paris. Pepys visited the London coffee house on 10 December 1660: "He [Colonel Slingsby] and I in the evening to the Coffee House in Cornhill, the first time that ever I was there, and I found much pleasure in it, through the diversity of company and discourse."

The Grand Café, Oxford, occupies the site of England's very first coffee house

7 COFFEE HOUSES BECAME 'THE FIRST INTERNET'

For Pepys – and for many other literate men – the coffee house was his newspaper, his internet. In his diaries he refers to the latest news of the conflict with the Dutch, "the comet seen in several places" (15 December 1664) and the "threat of the plague growing upon us... and of remedies against it" (24 May 1665). In his entry for 3 November 1663 Pepys refers to diverse discussions on the Roman empire, the difference between being awake and dreaming, and a discourse on insects.

By 1675 there were more than 3,000 coffee houses in England alone. Some even offered bed and breakfast for overnight guests. Many seemed to follow the Turkish coffee house business model, if their exotic names are anything to go by: there were up to 57 different Turk's Head coffee houses; The Jerusalem Coffee-house; various types of the Blackamoor or Ye Blackmore's Head; The Oriental Cigar Divan; The Saracen's Head (of Dickens fame); The Africa and Senegal Coffee-house; The Sultaness; The Sultan's Head; Solyman's Coffee House and Morat Ye Great.

London intellectuals gathered in the city's coffee houses to discuss the issues of the day – with the debates sometimes getting quite heated

PAUL CHRYSTAL is an author, history consultant and broadcaster. His books include *Coffee: A Drink for the Devil* (Amberley Publishing, 2016) and *A History of Britain in 100 Objects* (Destinworld Publishing, 2022)

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X1

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ANDREW LAMBERT
is Laughton professor of naval history in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. His books include *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Routledge, 2020).

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

THE DISCONCERT OF EUROPE

1821–29

The Ottoman empire's rule over Greece comes to an end following the Greek War of Independence, serving to highlight the once-mighty empire's decline.

1829

The Russo-Turkish War of 1828–29 ends in Russian protection of the Ottoman-held Danubian Principalities (Moldavia and Wallachia) in the Balkans. The Treaty of Edirne also grants Russia access to shipping through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus straits.

SEP 1833

Russia's Tsar Nicholas I (*above*) labels the Ottoman empire the "sick man of Europe" while meeting with Prince Metternich of Austria.

1852

▶ French president Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte (later Napoleon III) lobbies the Ottoman empire to recognise France as the protector of Christian monks and pilgrims in Jerusalem. In response, Nicholas I insists that Russia be named protector of the city's Holy Places and of all Orthodox Christians across the Ottoman empire.

MAR 1855

▲ Nurse Mary Seacole arrives in Constantinople and proceeds to the Crimea, where she founds the British Hotel for convalescing soldiers.

26 JAN 1855

The Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont, keen to gain Britain and France's support for the cause of Italian unification, joins the war on the allied side and sends an expeditionary force of 15,000 troops to the Crimea.

4 NOV 1854

▶ Florence Nightingale and 38 fellow nurses from Britain arrive at the Barrack Hospital in Scutari (a district of Constantinople) and later begin caring for injured troops brought in from the battles of Balaclava and Inkerman, amid squalid conditions.

25 OCT 1854

▼ The battle of Balaclava ends with the disastrous Charge of the Light Brigade, during which 110 British men are killed and about 130 wounded.

2 MAR 1855

▲ Nicholas I dies in St Petersburg and is succeeded by his son, Alexander II, as Russian tsar.

9 AUG 1855

▼ Sveaborg, a major Russian fortress off Helsinki, is destroyed (*below*) by an Anglo-French fleet, leaving the naval base of Kronstadt – and thus St Petersburg – vulnerable to allied attacks.

8–11 SEP 1855

The French capture the Malakoff fortification near Sevastopol and the Russians abandon the city. The siege ends on 11 September.

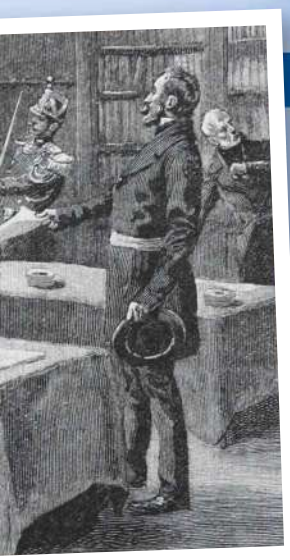
29 JAN 1856

▼ The Victoria Cross is instituted as the highest award in the British honours system. The medals, the first of which are awarded to 111 veterans of the Crimean War, are alleged to have been cast from Russian cannons captured at Sevastopol.

GETTY IMAGES X13, ALAMY X4

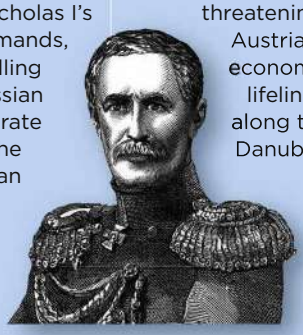
We chart some of the most important moments in the story of the Crimean War: from the Ottoman empire's humiliation in Greece to the Charge of the Light Brigade and beyond

WORDS: DANNY BIRD



FEB 1853

On a mission to Constantinople, Russia's Prince Menshikov (*right*) echoes Nicholas I's earlier demands, again calling for a Russian protectorate over the Ottoman empire's 12 million Orthodox Christians.



JUL 1853

Russia occupies the Ottoman-held Danubian Principalities, threatening Austria's economic lifeline along the Danube.

23 SEP 1853

Eager to maintain its lucrative trade agreements with the Ottoman empire and fearful of Russia's territorial ambitions in the Balkans, Britain deploys the Royal Navy to Constantinople (now Istanbul), having already linked up with a French fleet in the Dardanelles Strait.

4 OCT 1853

▼ The Ottoman empire declares war on Russia, leading to the conflict's first battle at Oltenița (*below*), Wallachia, exactly one month later.

30 NOV 1853

▼ The Russian Black Sea fleet obliterates Ottoman warships anchored in the harbour at Sinop, northern Anatolia (*below*), killing nearly 3,000 Turks.

28 MAR 1854

Britain and France declare war on Russia after their ultimatum demanding that Russia withdraws its forces from the Danubian Principalities expires. The British and French, along with the Ottomans, will later become collectively known as the allies.

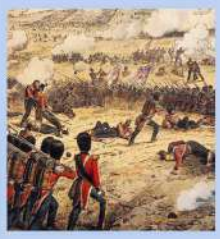
AUG 1854

Anglo-French supremacy over the Baltic Sea is secured following the destruction of the Bomarsund fortress in Åland. Austria occupies the Danubian Principalities after Russia's withdrawal, as Nicholas I seeks to avoid Vienna formally joining the conflict.

14 SEP 1854

Allied forces begin landing along the beaches of Kalamita Bay on the Crimean Peninsula's western shore. Preparations are soon underway to besiege the main Russian port of Sevastopol, some 30 miles south of the allied camp.

20 SEP 1854



▲ Russia loses the battle of the Alma, leading to the start of the allied siege of Sevastopol on 17 October.

1 FEB 1856

▼ Faced with the prospect of Austria joining the war on the side of the allies, Alexander II (*left*) accepts preliminary peace terms to bring the conflict to an end.

30 MAR 1856

The Treaty of Paris concludes hostilities after a five-day peace conference. Russia cedes Southern Bessarabia (at the mouth of the Danube), the Black Sea is demilitarised, and the Danube is opened to international shipping.

3 MAR 1861

▲ Serfdom is abolished across the Russian empire, the Crimean War having exposed a dire need for social reforms.

APR 1877–MAR 1878

▶ The Russians and Ottomans fight another war amid rising nationalist tensions across the Balkans and attempts by Russia to recover their lost territory. Romania (*right*) and several other states become independent nations following the Ottoman empire's defeat in 1878.

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CRIMEAN WAR

Professor Andrew Lambert answers key questions about the 19th-century conflict and its impact on Russia and Britain today

Q: What was the Crimean War, in a nutshell?

A: For Britain and France, the Crimean War lasted between 1854 and 1856, although the Russians and Turkish were officially at war from October 1853. It was a conflict that concluded a 40-year period of heightened tensions between Britain and Russia – essentially a 19th-century Cold War.

The war was about global influence, economic power, strategic position and, ultimately, it was about the future of the declining Ottoman empire and whether the Russians could punch through out of the Black Sea into the Mediterranean and become a western European power. The British backed Ottoman Turkey because it wasn't a threat, and it was a very good economic partner.

As the name suggests, the war was fought famously in the Crimea, but the primary theatre of the conflict was in the Baltic, and the main instrument of victory was economic warfare.

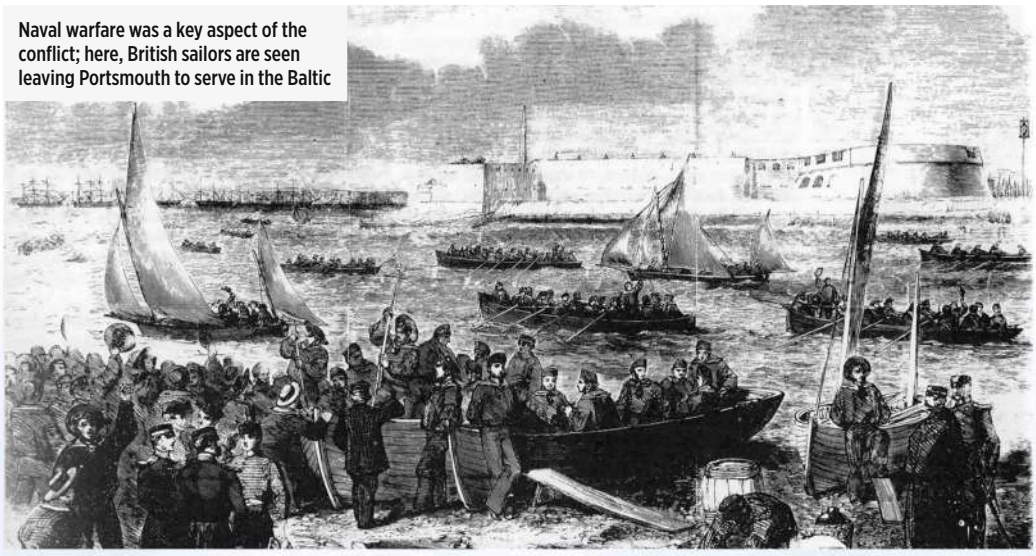
Q: What caused the war?

A: The origins of the Crimean War go back to the 18th century, starting with the Russian invasion of the Crimea in the 1780s and the capture of the harbour at Sevastopol. This then became the base of a new Russian Black Sea fleet, which posed a serious strategic threat to the Ottoman empire, whose capital, Constantinople (now Istanbul), was located on the Bosphorus – a narrow waterway that connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara. This gave the Russians a major strategic advantage – if they could strike at the heart of the Ottoman empire, they would be able to march forward rapidly.

After Napoleon's defeat in 1815, Britain and Russia were the two dynamic powers in the global system. They embraced radically opposing political concepts, much as they do today: Britain was a global sea power, Russia was a continental military empire.

Russia had already fought several conflicts against the Ottoman empire, including the Russo-Turkish War of 1787–92, which saw a naval battle at the port of Ochakov (now in modern Ukraine)

And so – through this clash of cultures and strategic ambition – we get this war, which everybody thinks was all about the Crimea, but it was not. It was actually a much bigger, long-running conflict between these two great powers in which Turkey was one of the potential flashpoints. The other potential flashpoints included Iran, Afghanistan, Finland, northern Norway, Alaska and China.



Naval warfare was a key aspect of the conflict; here, British sailors are seen leaving Portsmouth to serve in the Baltic

Q: How important was naval warfare to the conflict?

A: It was crucial. When we talk about the Crimean War, most people have visions of deluded cavalry charges, thin red lines of infantry and Florence Nightingale; the naval dimension is often overlooked in favour of these stories.

It was the Royal Navy that transported Britain's army and landed soldiers in the Crimea. Most of the heavy artillery used during the siege of Sevastopol was naval, many of the gunners were naval, and it was the Royal Marines of the Fleet who backed up the Highlanders at the battle

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X2

of Balaclava. From medical evacuation to transporting supplies, the whole thing was run by the Navy. Significantly, the main theatre of the war in the Baltic was naval, too, even if there was little violence there because the Russians wouldn't come out to fight.

Ultimately, this was a maritime strategic effort, and in all four theatres – the Baltic, the Black Sea, the White Sea and the Pacific – the primary target was the Russian navy and its bases.

Q: What was Florence Nightingale's role in the war?

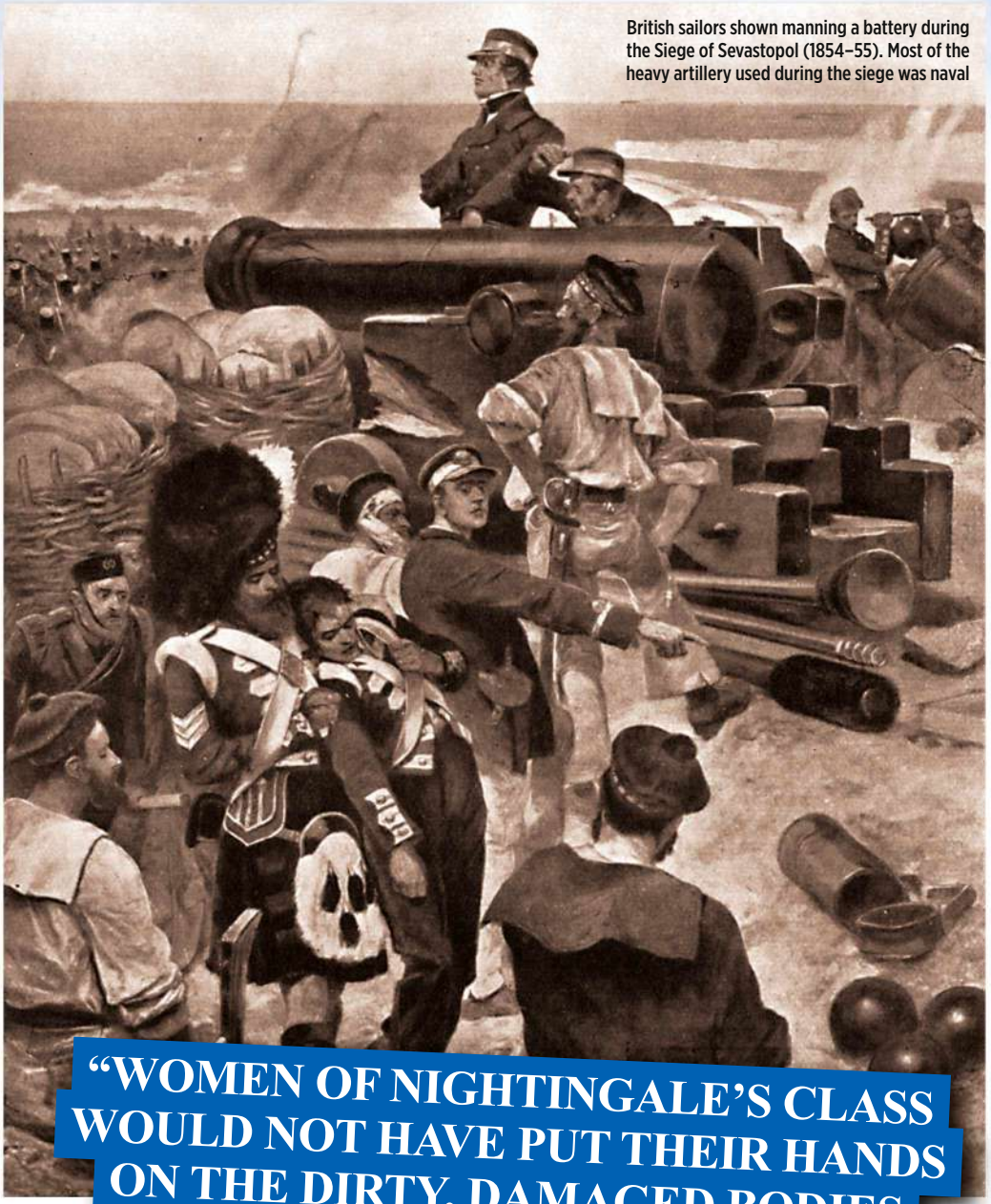
A: Well, it's true that Florence Nightingale ended up inventing the modern nursing profession, but that's not what she was doing in the Crimea. In the Crimean War she was a hospital manager, and a very good one at that. But much of the actual hospital work was done by male orderlies, as had always been the case – bandsmen, buglers and men in non-combatant roles who were still part of the regiment strength. Women of Nightingale's class would not have dreamt of putting their hands on the dirty, damaged bodies of working-class men. So, any female nursing that was done was not carried out by her or her immediate circle. Instead, it was done by women of lower status, many of them coming through holy orders, such as Catholic nuns.

Florence Nightingale's most important achievement was to take command of a pretty disparate group of organisations that were sending people into the theatre of war. She imposed order and gained control of funds, so it was her managerial skills that really mattered. By contrast, Mary Seacole went to the Crimea to run a hotel, but she also took a very active role in first aid and dealing with the wounded as far as it's possible for one person to do.

Nightingale and Seacole were at different ends of the spectrum: one was organising aid as an extension of government, and the other was delivering aid as an extension of hospitality.

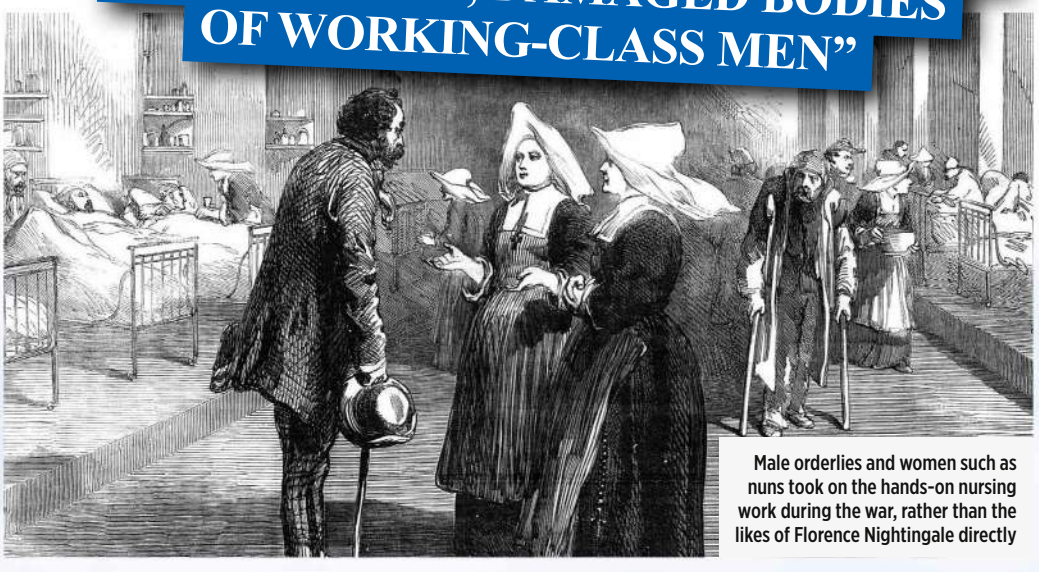
Q: Did any country have a distinct advantage in military hardware or weaponry?

A: The British and French had a serious advantage on the battlefield. They used rifled muskets, which gave them an accurate range three times that of the Russians, who were using smoothbore muskets. That being said, the Russians in Sevastopol had lots of artillery, mostly big naval artillery, so they weren't short of firepower in that regard. ▶

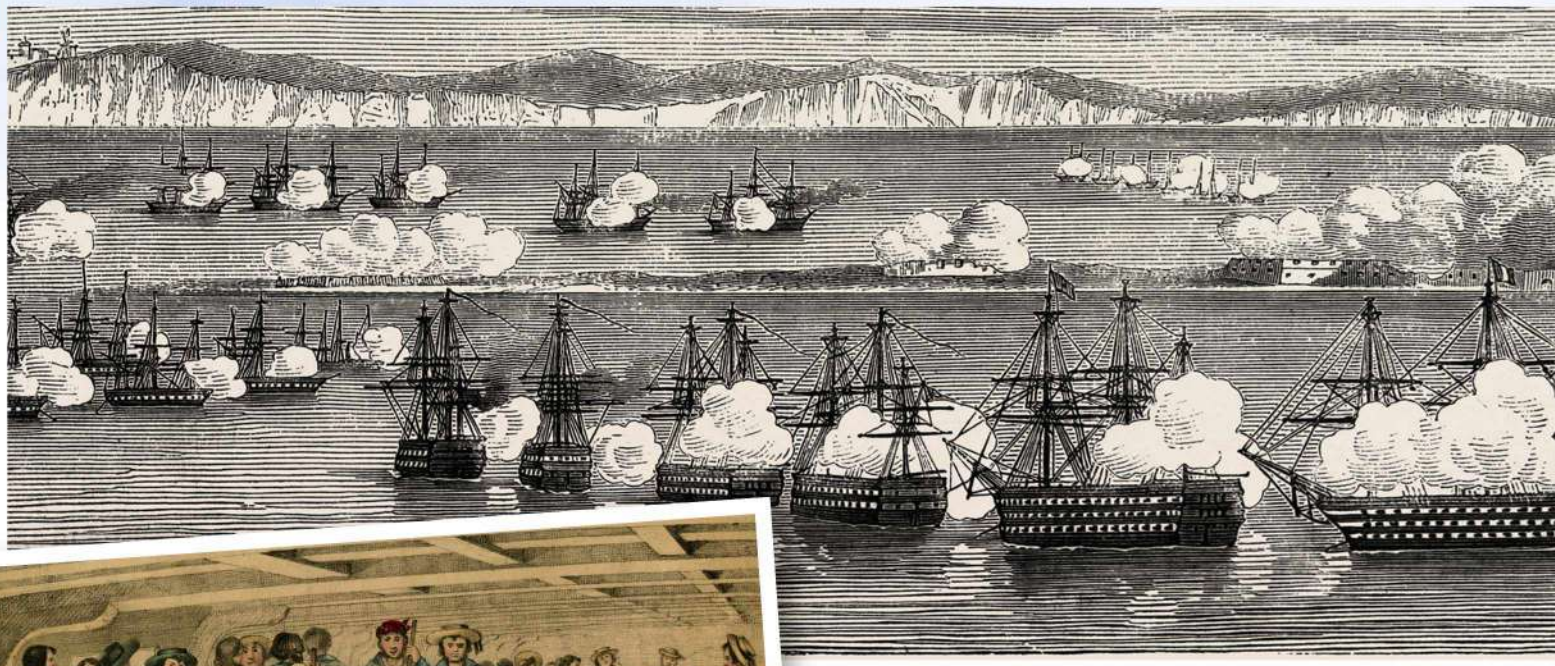


British sailors shown manning a battery during the Siege of Sevastopol (1854–55). Most of the heavy artillery used during the siege was naval

"WOMEN OF NIGHTINGALE'S CLASS WOULD NOT HAVE PUT THEIR HANDS ON THE DIRTY, DAMAGED BODIES OF WORKING-CLASS MEN"



Male orderlies and women such as nuns took on the hands-on nursing work during the war, rather than the likes of Florence Nightingale directly



ABOVE: **The allies used armoured warships – a world first – during their attack on Fort Kinburn in 1855**

LEFT: **A lithograph depicts sailors on the gun deck of a British warship around the time of the conflict**

"THE BEST THAT RUSSIA COULD HAVE HOPED FOR WAS A DRAW AND FOR THE ALLIES TO GO HOME"

◀ The allies, however, had other advantages, including deploying the world's first armoured warships in battle. During their attack on Fort Kinburn (now in modern Ukraine) on 17 October 1855, three armoured batteries, specifically designed to attack coastal forts, were used by the French, and the British had several of these as well. The Russians, though, made the first use of underwater moored mines in an attempt to sink ships. The mines weren't big enough to actually sink any ships, but they laid big minefields that the allied navies had to sweep up.

Allied horses, particularly the British horses, were very powerful animals known for their endurance. The Charge of Light Brigade was five times as far as an 18th-century cavalry force would have charged, so these were much bigger, stronger animals than those used in the past. The French, too, had very good horses, mainly of North African descent – smaller, agile horses more used to campaigning in rough terrain.

Steamships were massively important in the logistics of the war, and their use meant that by the middle of 1855, the allies were able to supply any number of men to the Crimea. There were nearly a quarter of a million allied soldiers in the Crimea living off supplies that were being brought to them by sea.

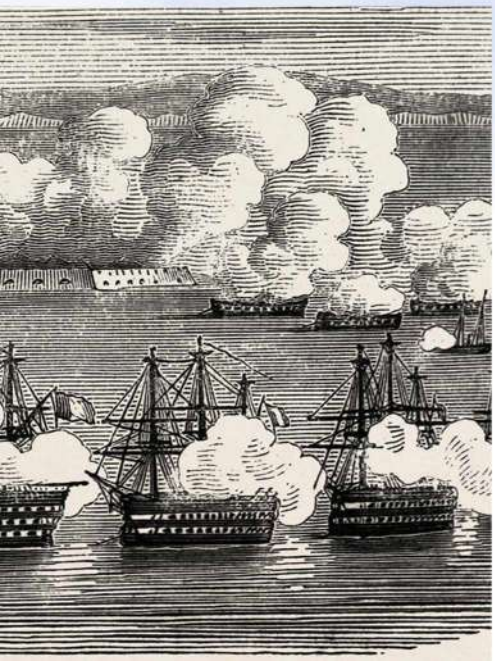
Q: Could Russia have won the war?

A: I don't think there was any way in which Russia could have won the Crimean War. The Russians had no means of attacking their real enemies: they could attack Turkey, but they couldn't get to Britain or France. The German powers were neutral, so the Russians couldn't march through Prussia and Austria.

This was the catastrophe of Russia's

A work by war artist William Simpson shows troops and horses carrying building materials to a British camp in the Crimea. The allies' horses were known for their resilience – although one unfortunate animal is shown lying dead in the foreground of this image

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X2



decision making: they picked a fight that they couldn't win. The best they could have hoped for was a draw and for the allies to go home. But that was presuming that the allies would lose the will to fight.

So, no, they could not have won this war. Defeat was inevitable – it was just a question of how long it took.

Q: Did geographical borders change as a result of the Crimean War?

A: There were some small border changes around Moldova but that's it, really. The main thing that happened after the war was the demilitarisation of many areas: the Black Sea became exclusively for merchant and police vessels, with no warships allowed, while in the Baltic the Åland Islands were demilitarised, meaning that the Russians couldn't rebuild their fortress at Bomarsund. This had a massive strategic impact and shifted the balance of power firmly in favour of the western maritime powers. It also meant that the British and French could send fleets into the Black Sea and the Russians could do nothing about it.

Elsewhere, Sweden ceased to be under the dominion of the Russian tsar, as it had been between 1815 and 1854, and joined the western world.

Q: What changes did the Crimean War bring about in the militaries of Europe and beyond?

A: The first thing to point out about the Crimean War is that pretty much everything that happened in the American Civil War (1861–65) was based on what had happened in the Crimea – from rifled muskets and trenches, to massive fortifications and ironclad warships. The ironclad Confederate warships of the American Civil War were essentially straight copies of what the British and French were using in 1855. And when Union soldiers went into battle wearing their peaked caps and baggy red trousers, they were dressing up like Frenchmen because the French had the best army in the world.

Every army in Europe was impacted by the Crimean War, too: they raced to get better rifles, better artillery, and they started thinking about new tactics as well.

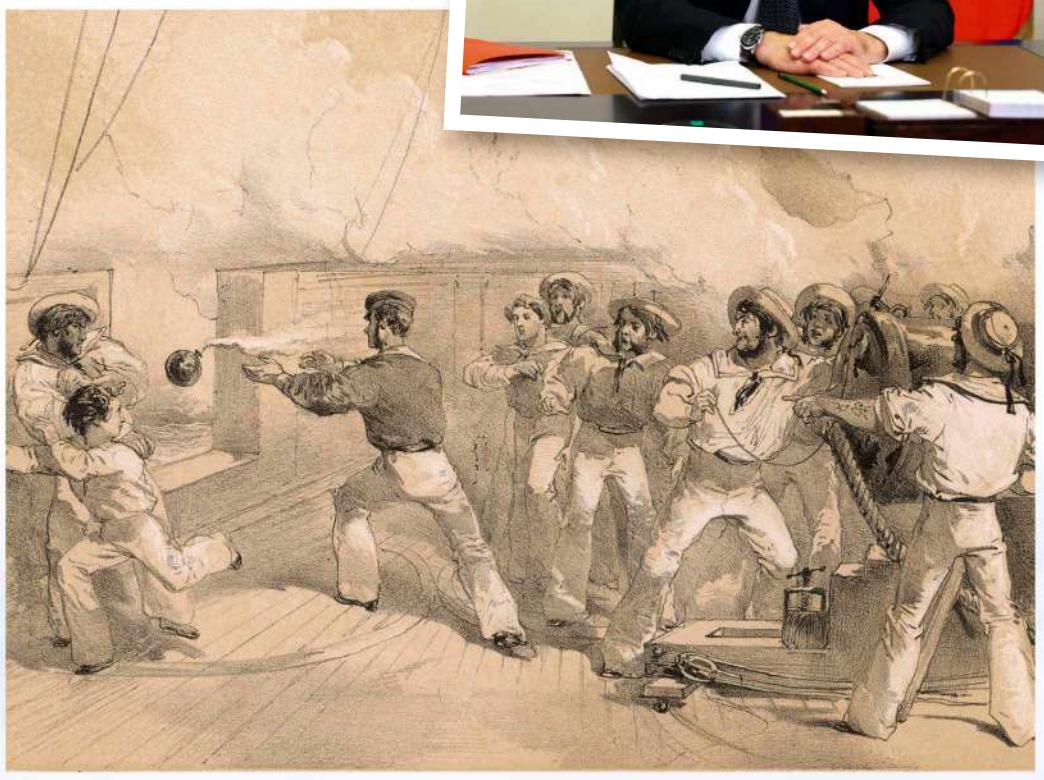
Q: How did the conflict affect Russian identity?

A: The Crimea is one of many wars in which the Russians assert that they were attacked by eastern or western powers who overran their territory and humiliated them. This is a belief that used to have real resonance in Ukraine, which was an area where – during the Crimean War – the Russians were propagandising and actively preparing the population to resist the western forces. Indeed, the arguments that Russian president Vladimir Putin is using today regarding the hostility of the west and the cultural damage that the west could cause has echoes with the earlier conflict.

The big problem with the Crimean War is that, in Britain at least, we've completely forgotten the role of everybody else. We've forgotten who our allies were, that there was fighting in the Baltic, and that the main instrument of victory was economic warfare. Instead, we only seem to remember stories like the Charge of the Light Brigade, which are either not true or not as significant as they have been portrayed. We've confused the window dressing with strategic power.

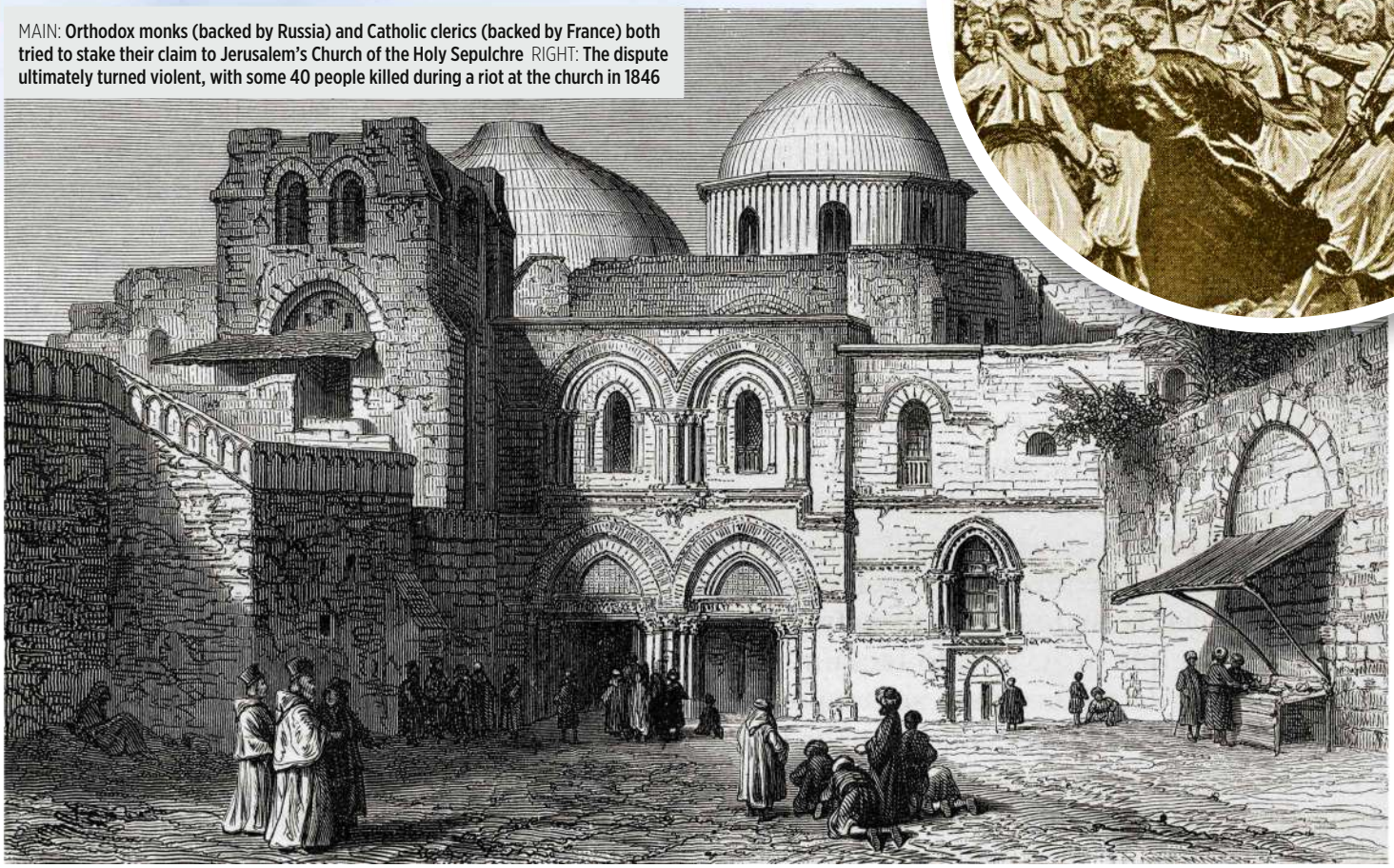
ANDREW LAMBERT is Laughton professor of naval history in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. His books include *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Routledge, 2020)

Putin's recent rhetoric regarding Ukraine echoes Russian propaganda of the Crimean War



Charles Davis Lucas throws a live shell off the upper deck of HMS *Hecla* during the allies' attack on Bomarsund, 1854. The officer's heroics resulted in him becoming the very first recipient of the Victoria Cross

MAIN: **Orthodox monks (backed by Russia) and Catholic clerics (backed by France) both tried to stake their claim to Jerusalem's Church of the Holy Sepulchre** RIGHT: **The dispute ultimately turned violent, with some 40 people killed during a riot at the church in 1846**



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THE GREAT UNRAVELLING

Religious tensions and Russian ambitions shattered the system that had long prevented war between Europe's major powers

Mention the Crimean War to most people, and many will immediately think of the Light Brigade charging into a blizzard of Russian bullets and Florence Nightingale tending stricken British troops. Yet the incident that made this brutal 19th-century conflict all but inevitable involved monks not Redcoats, crucifixes not sabres – and there wasn't a nurse in sight.

Just a few years before the Crimean War broke out, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, believed by many to sit on the very spot where Jesus Christ was crucified, found itself at the centre of a vicious brawl between two sets of opposing holy men. On one side stood Jerusalem's Orthodox monks; on the other its Catholics clerics. The issue over which these two rival branches of Christianity butted heads was the question of who wielded ultimate control over the most sacred sites in Palestine.

For years, tensions had been escalating at churches across the holy land. It was at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, however, that the rivalry turned physical, with the two groups coming to blows with fists, knives, candlesticks and crucifixes.

Such was the level of violence that, in 1852, Lord Malmesbury, British foreign secretary, commented on "the melancholy spectacle" of "rival churches contending for mastery in the very place where Christ died for mankind".

Melancholy it might have been but the dispute was hugely consequential – for both sets of monks had powerful backers. The Orthodox clerics were supported by the Russian empire; their Catholic foes championed by France, which had recently allied itself with Britain.

For more than a decade these European superpowers had engaged in an increasingly dangerous dance of diplomatic brinkmanship. The monks' battle in Jerusalem set them on a seemingly irreversible course for war.

The Treaty of Vienna, signed in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, had aimed to prevent another 'strongman' from attempting to conquer Europe

To understand why, we need to leave Palestine and travel back to the city of Vienna in 1815. For it was here, in the Austrian capital, that a treaty was signed in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars that would set the template for Europe's balance of power across the 19th century.

NAPOLEONIC ROOTS

There were numerous beneficiaries of the Treaty of Vienna, but it can be argued that no nation gained more than Britain. The negotiations that preceded the treaty saw the British attempting to engineer a network of alliances that prevented a single strongman ever dominating Europe again (as Napoleon Bonaparte had once done), so they could avoid another costly war and get on with the business of running their global empire. For the most part, Britain got its way.

This outcome no doubt delighted politicians in London. Less happy was the leader of another nation that had emerged victorious from the Napoleonic Wars: Russian tsar Alexander I. Nationalist and expansionist, Alexander had designs on being the European strongman that Britain most feared. He and his even more militaristic successor, Nicholas I, railed against British power and the liberal, democratic ideals that they saw emanating from the west. The scene was now set for an intense geopolitical rivalry.

In the middle of these two nations sat the Ottoman empire, a centuries-old imperium whose ailing condition had earned it the nickname "the sick man of Europe". That sick man status had already seen it fall foul of Russia's expansionist ambitions. As early as the 1780s the Russians had seized the Black Sea port of Sevastopol in order to gain its fleet a priceless warm water harbour. When, in the 1820s, Russian forces advanced into Ottoman Bulgaria, the Caucasus, and northeastern Anatolia, British fears of Russia's million-strong army surging towards India, the jewel in its imperial crown, rose sharply.

As the middle of the century approached, the flames of Anglo-Russian tensions were fanned further by the re-emergence of France as a military power. The French were also fearful of growing Russian ambitions and added another combustible element to the mix: religion. Paris threw its weight behind the claims of Catholic monks to be the true authority over Palestine's holy sites – in direct opposition to Russian-backed Orthodox clerics. The result was the battle of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

These religious tensions were the spark that ignited a diplomatic tinderbox. The Ottomans, in whose territory Palestine was sited, found themselves the rope in an increasingly vigorous tug of war between the Russians and their Anglo-French rivals. When the Ottomans acknowledged Russian authority over Palestine's Christians, Paris sent a battleship, the *Charlemagne*, to Istanbul to encourage them to change their mind. When this French brand of gunboat diplomacy worked, the Russians sent their own military mission to the Danubian Principalities (modern Romania) on the Russo-Turkish border.

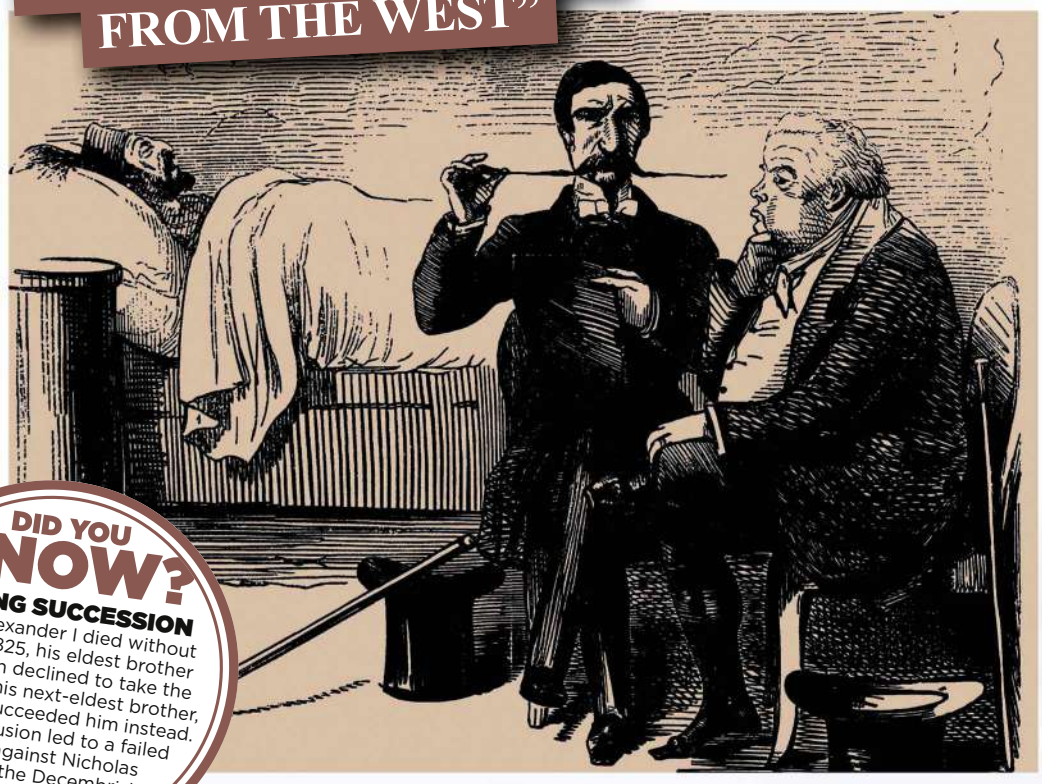
OTTOMAN OUTRAGE

With talks failing and Tsar Nicholas I left fuming at "the infernal dictatorship" of Stratford Canning, Britain's ambassador to the Ottoman empire, conflict moved ever closer. And so it proved in October 1853, when the Turks, enraged at Russian incursions, declared war on Moscow.

For now Britain and France stayed out of the conflict. Yet all that changed in the wake of the battle of Sinop on 30 November 1853, which saw Russian battleships pounding Ottoman ships in the Black Sea, killing nearly 3,000 Turks. Within two months, French and British fleets had themselves sailed to the Black Sea. On 28 March 1854, with public opinion still inflamed by the bloodbath at Sinop, they entered what would soon be known as the Crimean War.

WORDS: SPENCER MIZEN

"THE TSARS RAILED AGAINST THE LIBERAL, DEMOCRATIC IDEAS THEY SAW EMANATING FROM THE WEST"



An 1853 cartoon shows Britain's Lord Palmerston and France's Napoleon III debating what they should do with the Ottoman empire – represented here by Sultan Abdul Mejid I as a literal "sick man" of Europe

DID YOU KNOW?

SIBLING SUCCESSION

When Alexander I died without issue in 1825, his eldest brother Konstantin declined to take the throne, so his next-eldest brother, Nicholas, succeeded him instead. The confusion led to a failed coup against Nicholas called the Decembrist Revolt.

THE BATTLES THAT SHAPED THE CRIMEAN WAR

From the first clash along the Danube to the fierce fight to take Sevastopol, we examine the conflict's most important encounters

THE BATTLE OF OLTENIȚA

OTTOMAN VICTORY

4 NOVEMBER 1853

- 8,000 Ottomans v 6,000 Russians
- Killed: 30 Ottomans, 600–700 Russians

The war's first military engagement came several months before Britain and France joined the hostilities. Near the village of Oltenița in the region of Wallachia (now part of Romania), the Ottomans established fortified positions on the banks of the River Danube, ready to defend their territory against the steadily advancing Russians under the command of General Peter Dannenberg.

As his troops approached these defences, Dannenberg moved his infantrymen to the front. However, despite some of them managing to breach the fortifications' moat, the Russians suffered heavy losses and were recalled, clearly unprepared for the level of artillery required to destabilise the Ottomans' defences. Perhaps surprisingly, the Ottomans didn't pursue the retreating Russians, content to have merely contained the opening battle of what would be a drawn-out war. But while not a crucial victory militarily, Oltenița's impact was more to do with psychology and morale.

The Ottoman forces successfully repelled the Russians at Oltenița, scoring a morale-boosting victory, as well as a tactical victory, in the process

The Russian attack on Sinop sparked anger across Europe, serving to hasten Britain and France's entry into the war

THE BATTLE OF SINOP

RUSSIAN VICTORY

30 NOVEMBER 1853

- 12 Ottoman ships v 11 Russian ships
- Killed: 3,000 Ottomans, 37 Russians

Less than a month after Russian progress on land had been derailed at Oltenița, the first naval battle of the war gave Russia a significant victory. At the port of Sinop on the Black Sea's southern shore, a Russian fleet – including six battleships – attacked a dozen smaller Ottoman ships in the town's harbour, all but one of which were sunk or run aground. The Russian squadron remained intact.

As well as benefitting from the element of surprise, this dominant victory was testament to the Russians' deployment of explosive shells which, far more destructive than cannonballs, decimated the wooden hulls of the Ottoman vessels. Not content with demobilising these ships in such a brutal and unrelenting manner, the Russians then turned their aim on Sinop itself, shelling the town and claiming the lives of a great many civilians.

Back in St Petersburg, the authorities were both relieved and ecstatic that the hefty financial investment made in upgrading the Russian navy had produced such an emphatic result. Elsewhere in Europe, the unprovoked nature of the attack in Sinop drew instant condemnation; the word 'massacre' was never far from critics' lips. Deep concern over both Russia's intentions and its naval firepower fuelled and strengthened the argument for western Europe to become engaged militarily in the conflict. Amid a growing anti-Russian fervour, British and French warships entered the waters of the Black Sea in January 1854. The war was no longer simply Ottoman versus Russian.

GETTY IMAGES X8, ALAMY X1

 PLEASE NOTE: THE STRENGTH AND CASUALTY NUMBERS SHOWN HERE ARE ESTIMATES ONLY. FIGURES CAN VARY BETWEEN DIFFERENT SOURCES.

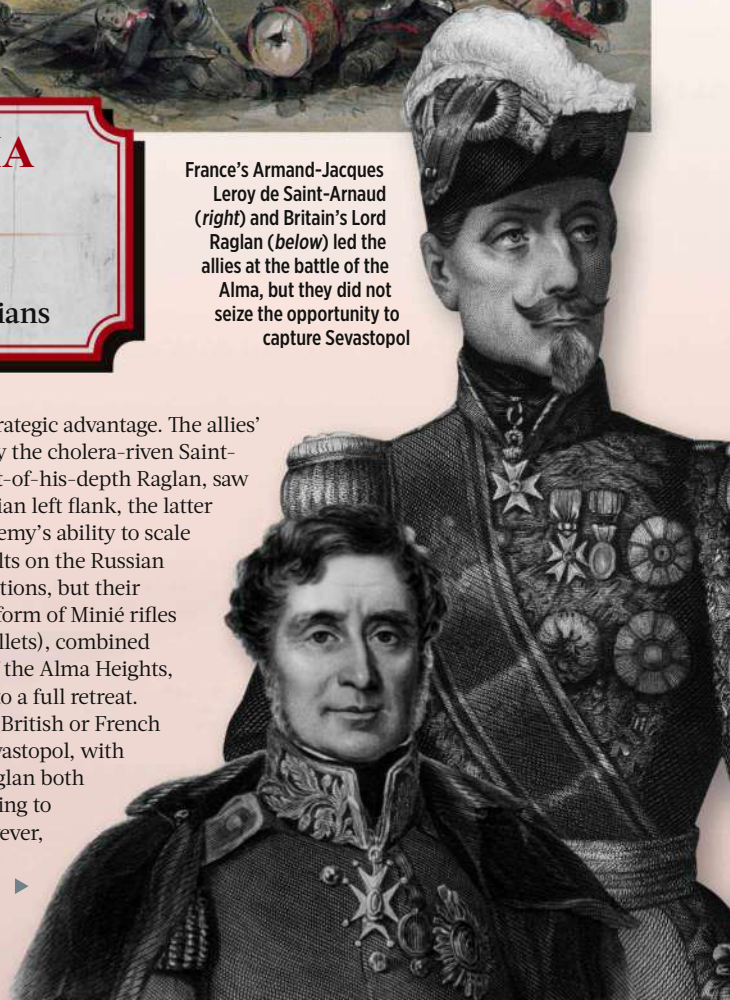
Wounded and dying troops being stretchered away following the battle of the Alma. The fierce clash ended with the Russians retreating towards Sevastopol

THE BATTLE OF THE ALMA

20 SEPTEMBER 1854

ALLIED VICTORY

- 58,000 allies v 37,500 Russians
- Killed or wounded: 4,100 allies, 5,000 Russians

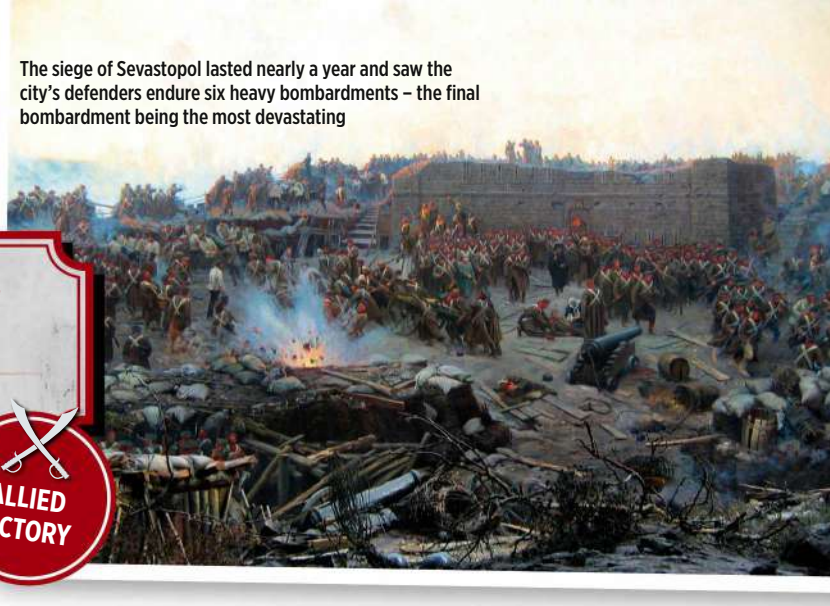


France's Armand-Jacques Leroy de Saint-Arnaud (*right*) and Britain's Lord Raglan (*below*) led the allies at the battle of the Alma, but they did not seize the opportunity to capture Sevastopol

In mid-September 1854, an allied force of British, French and Ottoman troops landed on the Crimean Peninsula in a move not foreseen by Russia, which hadn't predicted a land campaign as winter approached. Under the command of Britain's Lord Raglan and France's Armand-Jacques Leroy de Saint-Arnaud, the combined forces were vast in number. Such was the scale of the allied effort – hundreds of vessels laden with armour, horses and men had crossed the Black Sea – that it took five days for the entire party to disembark before the massed ranks began to march towards the strategically significant port of Sevastopol, around 35 miles away.

After a comparatively minor clash between the allies and the Russians at the Bulganak River, stiffer resistance was in place seven miles away at the mouth of the Alma River, where the Russians had taken up position atop the Alma Heights, a series of bluffs and cliffs which gave them a strategic advantage. The allies' tactics, largely drawn up by the cholera-riven Saint-Arnaud rather than the out-of-his-depth Raglan, saw the French attack the Russian left flank, the latter being surprised at their enemy's ability to scale the cliffs. The British assaults on the Russian right flank overran key bastions, but their superior firepower (in the form of Minié rifles that fired hollow-based bullets), combined with the French capture of the Alma Heights, drove the Russian army into a full retreat.

Remarkably, neither the British or French forces pursued them to Sevastopol, with Saint-Arnaud and Lord Raglan both blaming each other for failing to seize the opportunity. However, Raglan had his eye on a different port: Balaclava.



The siege of Sevastopol lasted nearly a year and saw the city's defenders endure six heavy bombardments – the final bombardment being the most devastating

THE SIEGE OF SEVASTOPOL

17 OCTOBER 1854 – 11 SEPTEMBER 1855

- Killed: 128,387 allies, 102,000 Russians

ALLIED VICTORY

The capture of Sevastopol – ahead of other ports on the Crimea Peninsula – had been a primary objective for the allied powers for one overriding reason: it was the base of Russia's Black Sea fleet, the means through which Nicholas I intended to secure footholds across the Mediterranean basin. Destroying the fleet – or at least disabling it – was crucial in stymying the tsar's expansionist ambitions. The allies chose to pen in Russian forces in the city, and in the process, they ended up creating one of the most famous sieges in history.

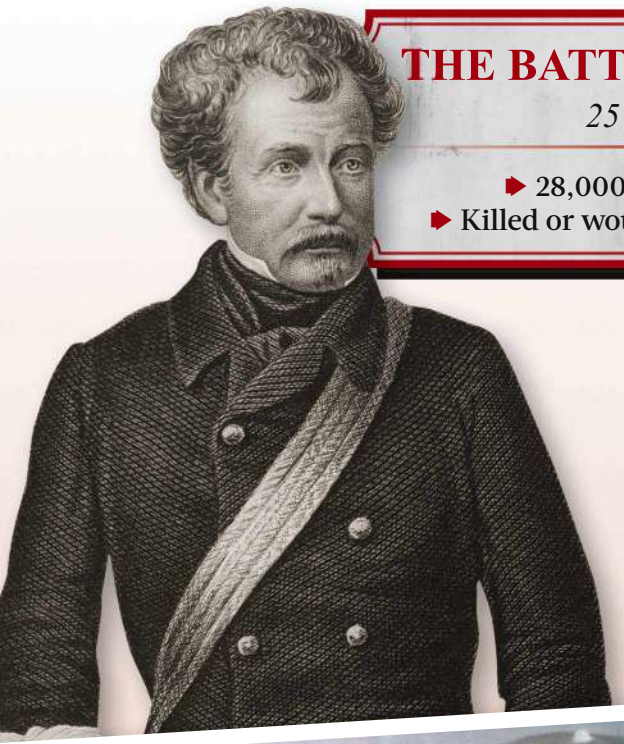
While the allies had 120 guns pointed at Sevastopol, both from the Black Sea and from the uplands south of the city, the Russians had three times as many to use for their defence, utilising the naval artillery repurposed after they had scuttled in excess of a dozen of their own ships to prevent the allies' capture of them. While many significant battles were won and lost beyond the siege lines the allies had constructed, the siege itself became a feature for nearly the next 12 months. The Russians withstood half a dozen heavyweight bombardments in Sevastopol during this time, but the sixth was particularly damaging, claiming between 2,000 and 3,000 Russian casualties on each of its three days. The heroic defence eventually mutated into a reluctant abandonment and retreat.

THE BATTLE OF BALACLAVA

25 OCTOBER 1854

- 28,000 allies v 25,000 Russians
- Killed or wounded: 615 allies, 627 Russians

NO VICTOR



TOP: **Major-General Colin Campbell led the 93rd Highland Regiment at Balaclava**
BOTTOM: **An 1896 painting shows British troopers crossing swords with their Russian opponents after making their way across "the valley of Death"**

Following their retreat at the battle of the Alma, the Russians spent the next month regrouping ahead of the next skirmish. While redeployed personnel from the Russian navy defended Sevastopol from inside the city, General Alexander Menshikov's soldiers operated beyond the allies' siege lines, able to move around the countryside as they tried to find the weakest section to attack.

They found it to the south, around the town of Balaclava. Lord Raglan had moved his men there after Alma, but didn't have enough troops to offer the most watertight defence of the siege's right flank. The Russians' first attack was on Ottoman forts on the Vorontsov Heights, and it was a successful encounter, with the Ottomans forced to retreat after an initial spell of stubborn defence. The Russians then approached the second defensive line in the region, one formed by Ottoman infantrymen and the British 93rd Highland Regiment.

At dawn, the regiment's commander, Major-General Colin Campbell, outlined to his troops what was about to occur at what was the last defensive line between the Russians and the town of Balaclava. "There is no retreat from here, men," he told them bluntly. "You must die where you stand." Without the numbers to set them up four-deep, as was customary, Campbell's defences were half as shallow. In their red uniform jackets, the 93rd met the oncoming Russian cavalry charge with two volleys of fire: one from 800 yards away and a second from 500 yards. This was sufficient. The Russians turned and fled, although Campbell had been forced to order the 93rd not to charge them with their bayonets. "93rd! 93rd! Damn all that eagerness!"

THE VALLEY OF DEATH

His advice might have served the equally eager Lord Raglan. Keen to deter the Russians from making off with British guns captured from Ottoman redoubts, he ordered that the Light Brigade go after them. Unencumbered by decent armour for either man or horse, the Light Brigade could cover ground quickly and thus disrupt the Russians fleeing with such heavy armaments.

So into the valley rode the Light Brigade; "the valley of Death" as Lord Tennyson's poem would later dub it. However, a miscommunication had taken them right into the heart of set-in Russian troops who had the British ringed on three sides of the valley. Chaos ensued. William Howard Russell from *The Times* saw "a flood of smoke and flame, through which hissed the deadly balls", while a French onlooker couldn't understand the logic of Raglan's order: "It is not war. It is madness."

Regardless of who was responsible for the misdirected attack, it terrified the Russians, who never again came out on horseback to face British cavalry.

THE BATTLE OF INKERMAN

5 NOVEMBER 1854

- 15,700 allies v 40,500 Russians
- Killed or wounded: 4,676 allies, 11,959 Russians

ANGLO-FRENCH VICTORY

After the Charge of the Light Brigade had seen the deaths of courageous soldiers led by misguided generals, the battle of Inkerman was a much different affair. Largely due to the day's foggy conditions, the Anglo-French forces mainly fought without orders from on high. Largely thanks to their own initiative, an allied victory ensued.

Again attempting to penetrate the long, under-protected allied siege lines around Sevastopol, General Menshikov had ordered another attack, this time in the vicinity of Mount Inkerman. He had up to 42,000 men at his disposal, although the area's hilly geography made such numbers impractical. Still, the Russians greatly outnumbered the 2,700-strong 2nd Division, with British generals swiftly calling for reinforcements.

The splintered nature of the ensuing battle, caused by both weather conditions and terrain, meant that officers could only direct the fighting immediately before them. Captain Edward Hamley of the British 1st Division explained that "once engaged, every man was his own general". As such, Inkerman became known as 'The Soldiers' Battle'.

Bolstered by the arrival of two 18-pounder guns, which drove off the Russian field artillery, the allies successfully held their position. The Russians would never launch another land-based attack on the allies' siege lines again.

Difficult weather and terrain led the clash at Inkerman (*above*) to be dubbed 'The Soldiers' Battle', with Captain Edward Hamley (*right*) claiming "once engaged, every man was his own general"

The Russians were thwarted in their attempts to seize the port city of Eupatoria thanks to a staunch allied defence

ALLIED VICTORY

THE BATTLE OF EUPATORIA

17 FEBRUARY 1855

- 32,000 allies (almost exclusively Ottomans) v 19,000 Russians
- Killed: 91 allies, 168 Russians

Sevastopol wasn't the only strategically crucial Crimean port. Fifty miles to the north, the Ottomans controlled the city of Eupatoria, an advanced base near the 'neck' of the peninsula that was well-placed to cut Russian supply lines. On 17 February 1855, the Russians attempted to capture the port, but soon encountered problems in penetrating its defences. Having advanced to the city walls, Russian leaders discovered that the protective water-filled ditches surrounding them were too deep to be able to launch an assault; they simply didn't offer a firm base from which the walls could be scaled. By 10 o'clock that morning, the Russians were already in retreat, a withdrawal hastened by Ottoman cavalry and infantry charging them.

An 1855 painting by Adolphe Yvon depicts the bloody combat that ensued as French troops tried to capture the Malakoff fort

FRENCH VICTORY

THE BATTLE OF MALAKOFF

8 SEPTEMBER 1854

- 70,500 French v 59,500 Russians
- Killed or wounded: 8,000 French, 13,000 Russians

The siege of Sevastopol had been prolonged thanks to Russia's defence of the city's harbour. On its south side, this protection was provided by the Malakoff-Kurgan ridge, on which stood a stone tower, the home of five heavy cannons. In September 1855, French forces tried to smash the siege's stalemate by attacking the Malakoff fort. After a day of intense combat, the fort fell and the French tricolour was raised up its flagpole.

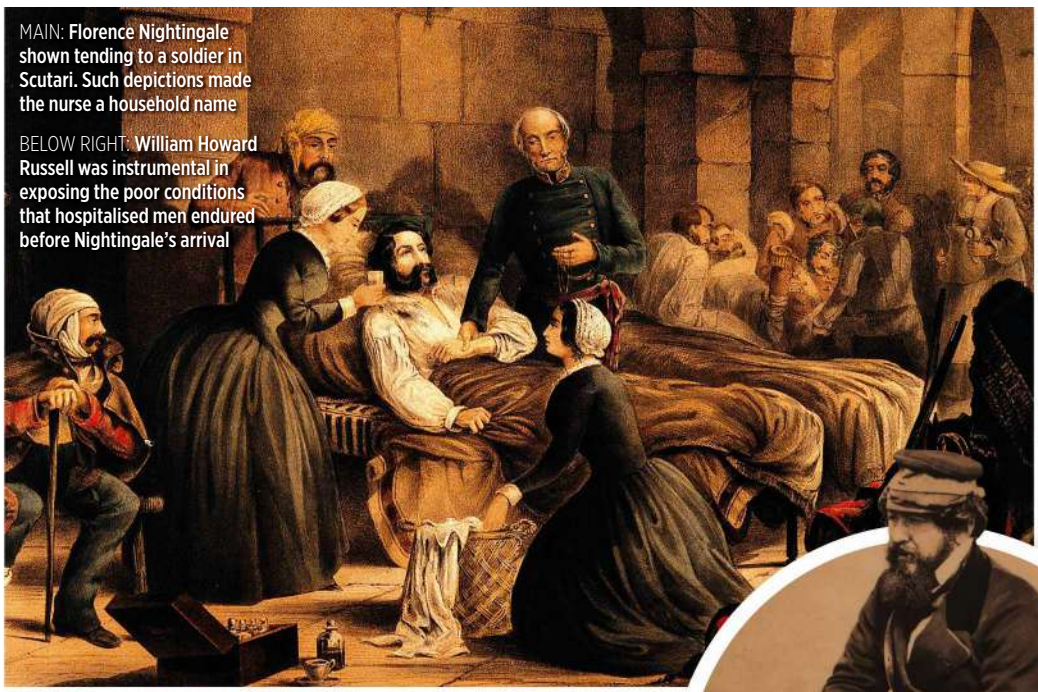
It had been a bloody encounter, but it was to be the war's last major battle. And it felt like the climax, too; no fewer than 19 generals on either side lost their lives, and the capture of the fort meant the capture of Sevastopol. But the clash did not decide the war. It would be factors away from the battlefield – such as bankruptcy, and pressure from Austria and Sweden – that would leave Russia unable to fight on.

WORDS: NIGE TASSELL

GETTY IMAGES X7, ALAMY X2

FLORENCE AND THE MILITARY MACHINE

Nursing and the treatment of wounded soldiers forever changed in the Crimean War, thanks in no small measure to an implacable Englishwoman named Florence Nightingale



MAIN: **Florence Nightingale shown tending to a soldier in Scutari. Such depictions made the nurse a household name**

BELOW RIGHT: **William Howard Russell was instrumental in exposing the poor conditions that hospitalised men endured before Nightingale's arrival**

To see photographs taken during the Crimean War is to catch a glimpse of a world on the cusp of military modernity. Not that this is immediately obvious, however. The most famous image caught by pioneering British war photographer Roger Fenton, titled *Valley of the Shadow of Death*, is of nothing more than a stark landscape pebbled with cannonballs. And his pictures of the soldiers show men in uniforms often not so different from the Napoleonic Wars era.

Yet to understand how one of the war's undeniably most famous figures, Florence Nightingale, had such an enduring influence on the history of medicine – both in terms of trauma treatment and the wider profession – it is important first to understand that this was a conflict of new technologies. Russia's use of exploding shells helped end the era of wooden combat ships; the British built the Grand Crimean Central Railway to bring supplies and men to the front; and messages were sent home via electric telegraph so that news of what was happening could reach London in a matter of days.

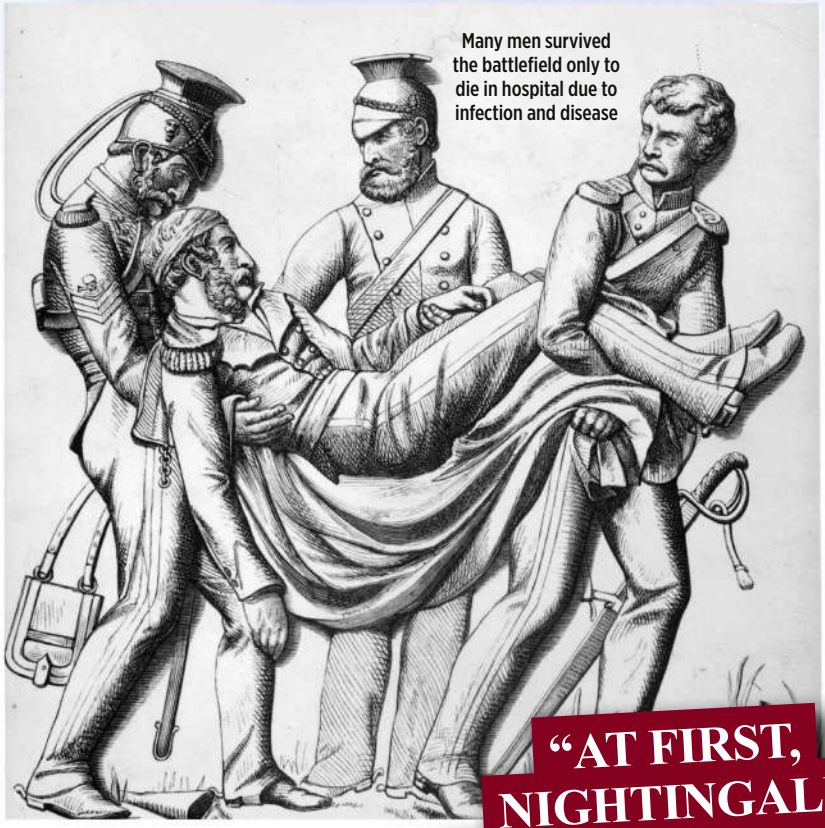
FEVER AND DYSENTRY

The despatches reaching Blighty, notably via a reporter for *The Times*, William Howard Russell, brought bad news. For despite the Crimean War concluding with Britain and its allies prevailing against Russia, it has rightly been remembered for military mismanagement. Nowhere was this more evident than in the treatment of the wounded. One army surgeon, Henry Walter Bellew, wrote in January 1855 that the patients at the hospital at Scutari (now Üsküdar in modern-day Turkey) were "swarming with vermin, huge lice crawling all about their persons and clothes. Many were grimed with mud, dirt, blood and gunpowder stains. Several were completely prostrated by fever and dysentery. The sight was a pitiable one and such as I had never before witnessed." He went on: "There has been somehow unaccountable neglect in the arrangements for this hospital."

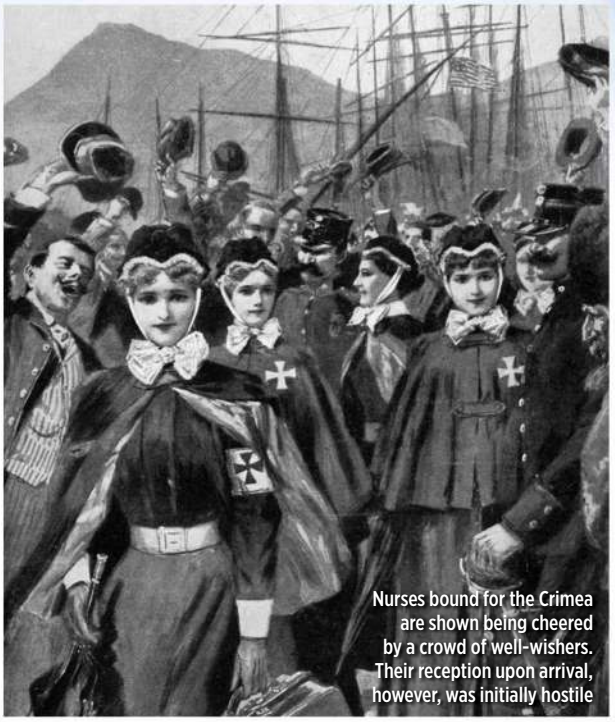
Here at Scutari, and repeated at other hospitals, was a scene born of a combination of a lack of organisation and a lack of professionalism. Perhaps most damning of all, there was an underlying sense that those leading the allied forces, products of a rigid class-bound system, simply weren't looking after the welfare of their men facing conditions in which firepower was intensifying and terrible injuries were inevitable.

Roger Fenton's *Valley of the Shadow of Death* – an 1855 photograph depicting a ravine littered with cannonballs – demonstrates the dangers that soldiers faced

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X3

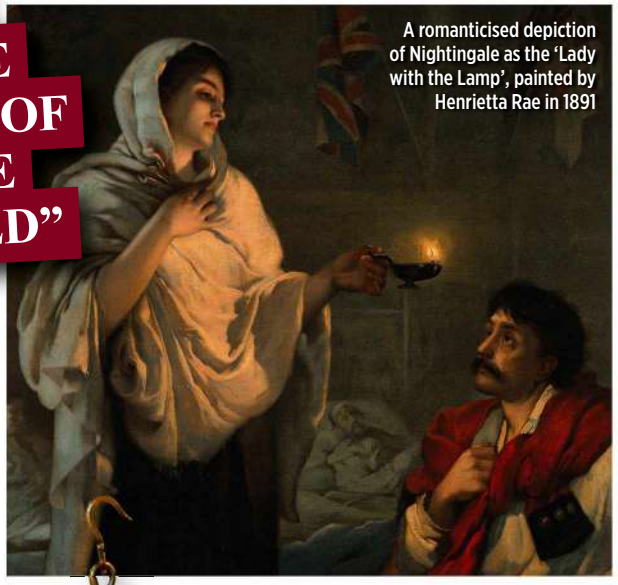


Many men survived the battlefield only to die in hospital due to infection and disease



Nurses bound for the Crimea are shown being cheered by a crowd of well-wishers. Their reception upon arrival, however, was initially hostile

"AT FIRST, NIGHTINGALE AND HER TEAM OF NURSES WERE NOT WELCOMED"



A romanticised depiction of Nightingale as the 'Lady with the Lamp', painted by Henrietta Rae in 1891

If it seems surprising today that a women in her thirties in the midst of the Victorian era should become such an important figure in the care of wounded troops and the conditions of hospitals, that's because Nightingale was a singular person. Born, in 1820, into a wealthy and liberal family, she was highly educated by her father, the Unitarian William Nightingale, and travelled extensively.

She was profoundly religious and experienced what she believed were "calls from God". This sense of mission inspired her to take up nursing, a profession then associated with working-class women and not viewed as a respectable career choice. To get a sense of why her decision initially caused her family distress, think of the boozy, dissolute and dangerously incompetent nurse character, Mrs Gamp, in Charles Dickens' novel *Martin Chuzzlewit*.

WARTIME CLASHES

Regardless, Nightingale embarked on her training and, in August 1853, became superintendent at the Institute for the Care of Sick Gentlewomen in Distressed Circumstances in London's Upper Harley Street. She held that position for over a year, and improved conditions there, until reports of Scutari made their way back to Britain. Her friend, the reforming politician Sidney Herbert, asked her to lead a team of nurses out to Scutari. Nightingale's wartime service, which would ensure her legacy, was about to begin.

At first, she and her team were not welcomed. Nightingale clashed with Sir John Hall, the chief British medical officer in the Crimea, who wrote of her that she displayed "an ambitious struggling after power inimical to the true interests of the medical department". He then angrily dismissed her as "a petticoat imperieuse in the Medical imperio!" Here was a culture clash between a man rooted in the rambunctiousness of the Duke of Wellington's army of nearly half a century earlier, and an implacable English lady looking to modernise.

Although she would probably not have viewed her situation in such terms, Nightingale would prevail over Hall, certainly in PR terms, by getting on with the work she thought needed doing. "She simply ignored his authority," noted Richard Aspin, head of the archives and manuscripts at the Wellcome Trust when the medical charity acquired Hall's letters in 2007. "She would no more have dreamed of consulting him about her nurses than she would have sought the opinion of a husband, if she ever had one, about hiring a parlour maid."

A lantern used by Nightingale during her overnight 'rounds'

SHINING A LIGHT

Thus was the legend of the 'Lady with the Lamp' born as Nightingale nightly did her rounds carrying a *fanous* lantern (rather than the open candle in a holder seen most often in romanticised illustrations of her). More importantly, the conditions at Scutari and other military hospitals began to improve, due in no small part to measures Nightingale introduced, her prioritising of cleanliness, and because she was so adept at highlighting ▶

ABOVE: **Nightingale (*centre*) pictured in 1886 with students of the nursing school she founded in London shortly after the conflict**

LEFT: **Mary Seacole was another pivotal figure during the Crimean War, using her own money to set up the British Hotel for recovering soldiers**

◀ deficiencies in the treatments she saw without worrying about who she might offend in doing so.

The significance of her contribution is a subject of ongoing debate, but issues around overcrowding, sewerage, hygiene standards, food, and ventilation at hospitals were all addressed during Nightingale's service in the war. As to her reputation, it has sometimes suffered as a result of how demanding she was – Nightingale certainly was not always an easy person to get along with.

In this context, it's fascinating how she has come to be compared to Mary Seacole, a British-Jamaican nurse and businesswoman who set up the British Hotel near Balaclava as "a mess-table and comfortable quarters for sick and convalescent officers". Of Seacole, Nightingale waspishly noted, "Anyone who employs Mrs Seacole will introduce much kindness – also much drunkenness and improper conduct," yet it seems their only known meeting passed off cordially.

In the summer of 1856, Nightingale returned to Britain, and, to her own surprise, she received a hero's welcome. Her experiences, notably in May 1855 when she was struck down by what was called 'Crimean fever', appear to have had a lasting impact on her health. It is possible she suffered from a debilitating form of brucellosis, associated with eating unpasteurised milk and cheeses.

Yet, in a sense, Nightingale was only beginning her service to health care. Having played a vital role in making the British Army better able to treat its men, she used her fame – and money raised by her supporters for the Nightingale Fund – to train the next generation of nurses. In turn, graduates from the Nightingale Training School at St Thomas' Hospital set up more schools around the world. Her book, *Notes on Nursing: What It Is and What It Is Not* (1859) offered practical advice for those caring for others, while her statistical analysis proved enormously influential (*see box, right*).

Most of all, Nightingale's work established nursing as a profession. In 1914, the mechanised mayhem of World War I brought hitherto unimaginable levels of carnage, but this time it was accepted and expected that nurses would serve, and among them would be blue bloods from Europe's royal families doing what was seen as their duty.

Carrying her lamp around the Scutari wards, Nightingale lit the way for this to happen.

WORDS: JONATHAN WRIGHT

LADY OF THE STATS

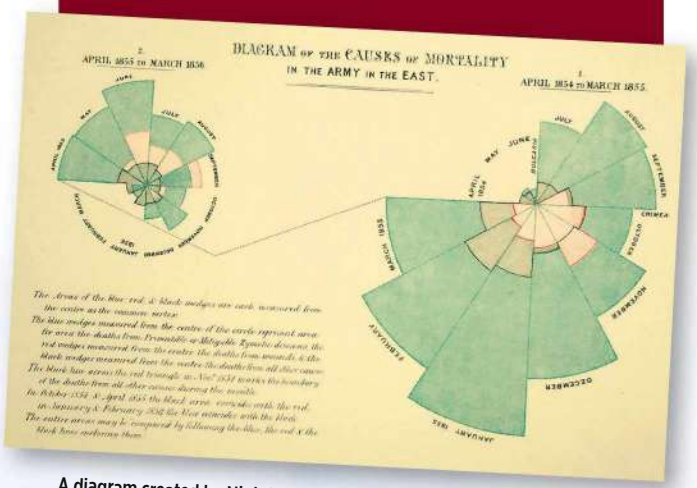
Florence Nightingale revolutionised nursing, and had the numbers to prove it

Among the subjects that William Nightingale taught his daughter Florence was mathematics, and it is clear that she was a gifted and willing student since, in her career as a nurse, she pioneered the use of statistics to analyse health issues and outcomes. During her service in the Crimean War, she gathered information on her patients: the number of soldiers being killed and injured, or who were diseased. Nightingale did not do this work herself: in an approach that is now commonplace, she ran a team that gathered statistical data.

How to convey her findings would be a major concern for her. After returning to Britain, she knew the widespread anger over mismanagement of the war would inevitably fade as time passed from the guns falling silent. Nightingale needed to bring the data alive, and so be able to convince parliamentarians, government officials and army officers of the need for change.

One method she used was to illustrate her findings through graphs, which may seem an obvious choice today in the age of infographics, but was a revolutionary approach in the 1850s. Nightingale created a 'polar area diagram', a form of pie chart that compared the causes of soldiers' deaths between April 1854 and March 1855 with those of the following 12 months. At a glance, this technique showed how her reforms and improvements in medical care at the front helped see a steep rise in survival rates, while highlighting just how many more troops died from preventable diseases rather than battlefield wounds.

Nightingale publicised her statistical work by collaborating with social theorist Harriet Martineau, who penned *England and Her Soldiers*, a proto-popular science volume to make her findings accessible to the widest-possible readership. The polar area diagram was printed on a fold-out page at the front. Yet it seems that there was still some way to go before Nightingale's ideas were accepted: the book was deemed to be unsuitable for the library shelves of army barracks.



A diagram created by Nightingale to show the causes of mortality in the British Army; the potent illustration would help inspire change in care of the wounded

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X2

THE CHANGING FACES OF WARFARE

Thanks to a host of 19th-century innovations, the Crimean conflict became the first truly 'modern' war

WEAPONRY

When the Crimean War broke out in 1853, fewer than 40 years had passed since the Napoleonic Wars. Yet the methods and technology used by both sides were a world apart from those in that earlier conflict, which had pockmarked Europe in the opening decades of the 19th century. Many new weapons and technologies were deployed for the first time, hence Crimea later being defined by many observers as the 'first modern war'.

One major advance was in rifle technology. The Enfield Pattern 1853 rifle-musket had been swiftly approved by the British government and put into mass production. In combination with the Minié musket ball, a hollow-based bullet that expanded when fired, Enfields put the allies at a distinct advantage over the Russians when it came to accuracy and inflicting casualties. The navies of both sides, however, adopted shell-firing guns – a technology that the Russians had utilised during the early naval battles against the Ottomans before the British and French joined proceedings.

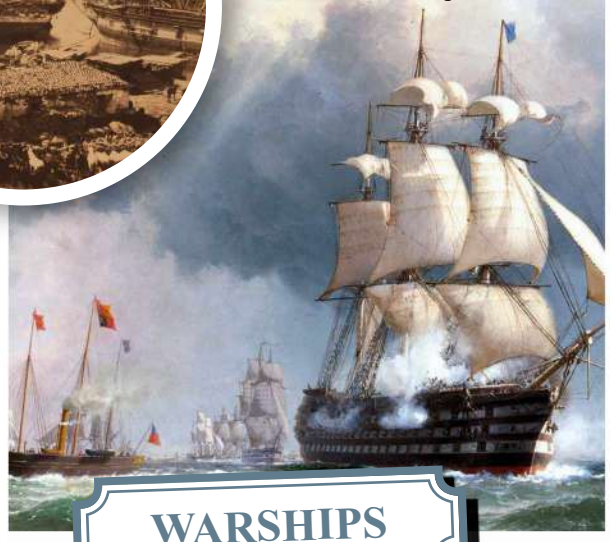
The war was also the first to see widespread use of mines, both on land and at sea. The Russian navy particularly favoured their deployment, setting more than 1,500 sea mines in the Gulf of Finland to deter any sorties by the Anglo-French fleets towards St Petersburg. The rules of engagement – or, at least, the methods of engagement – were now changed forever.

ABOVE: **Historical reenactors dressed as members of Britain's Rifle Brigade, armed with the innovative Enfield Pattern 1853**

RIGHT: **Another group of Crimean War reenactors. Both the Russians and the allies made use of advances in artillery technology**

LEFT: **A photograph by Roger Fenton (*see page 44*) shows British ships anchored at Balaclava**

BELOW: **Royal Navy ships depicted heading for the Baltic in 1854, tasked with preventing Russia's fleet from entering the North Sea**



WARSHIPS

The Crimean War is undeniably the point in military history at which the irresistibility of steam power in naval battles is universally acknowledged. Although the fleets of both sides were a mixture of sailing ships and steam-powered vessels, the greater number of modern ships built by the allies put them in control of the waters of the Black Sea. With the Russians only in possession of seven steam frigates, the rest of its more antiquated fleet were easily outmanoeuvred and outflanked by the allies' speedier and more agile steam-driven vessels.

Along with the heralding of widespread naval warfare under steam, the battles on the Black Sea accelerated the notion of armoured ships. The French were in the vanguard of their design and, after joining with Britain to enter the war, they shared plans for ironclad warships with the Royal Navy. After testing, the British government decided to build five of their own. France's armoured ships were dispatched to the Crimea the following year, where their role in destroying the Russian fortress at Kinburn on 17 October 1855 prompted all navies to embark on building such vessels.

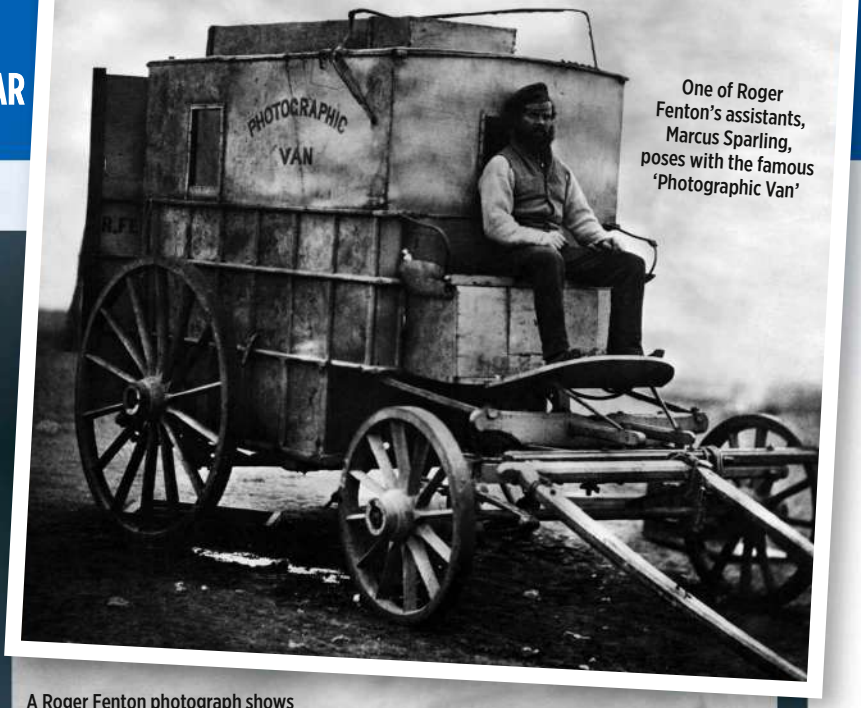
GETTY IMAGES X2, ALAMY X2

PHOTOGRAPHY

Accompanying the news reports updating readers about events in the Crimea were photographs from the war. While artists were seconded to the region by publications such as *The Illustrated London News*, the development of photography made the Crimean War, as historian Yakup Bektas has declared, "the most illustrated war to date and helped turn it into a visual spectacle".

When exhibited, the photography from the battlefields had an impact that the sketches did not possess. Although the images that appeared in the press were actually engravings based on the photographs (the technology to reproduce them in newspapers had not yet been created), readers were given a greater sense of the reality of the conflict – even if the images being published were a matter for subjective decision-making, and such editorial choices were susceptible to the requirements of propaganda.

Arguably the most notable photographer in the Crimea was Roger Fenton, who travelled around with his two assistants in a horse-drawn 'Photographic Van'. Despite his reputation, the Lancastrian seemed to sidestep capturing scenes of brutality and distress. Perhaps with one eye on posterity (and the other on self-preservation), he preferred to spend his time as a portrait photographer, usually with the upper echelons of the British military as his focus. Fenton was also accused of manipulating and even staging some of his non-portrait work. Nonetheless, whether completely honest, Fenton and others helped deliver a sense of the human element of war.



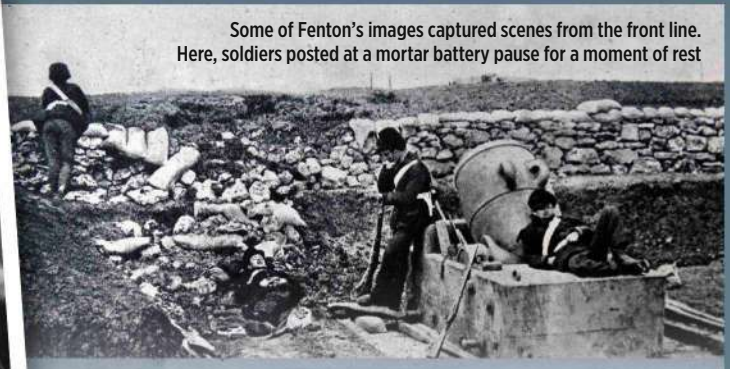
One of Roger Fenton's assistants, Marcus Sparling, poses with the famous 'Photographic Van'

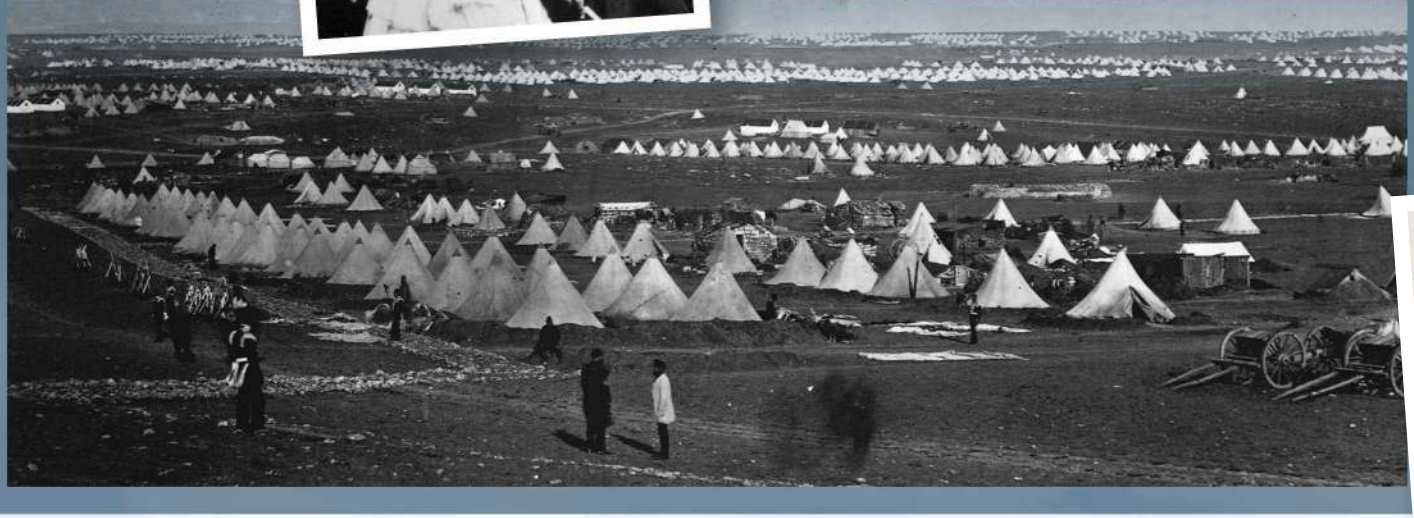
A Roger Fenton photograph shows soldiers of the 8th Hussars preparing food at a British Army camp

RIGHT: **A Fenton image shows a French *cantinière* – a woman attached to an army regiment who would furnish troops with water and wine**

BELOW: **A peaceful British camp. Photographs like Fenton's did not always show the brutality of the conflict**

Some of Fenton's images captured scenes from the front line. Here, soldiers posted at a mortar battery pause for a moment of rest





GETTY IMAGES X11

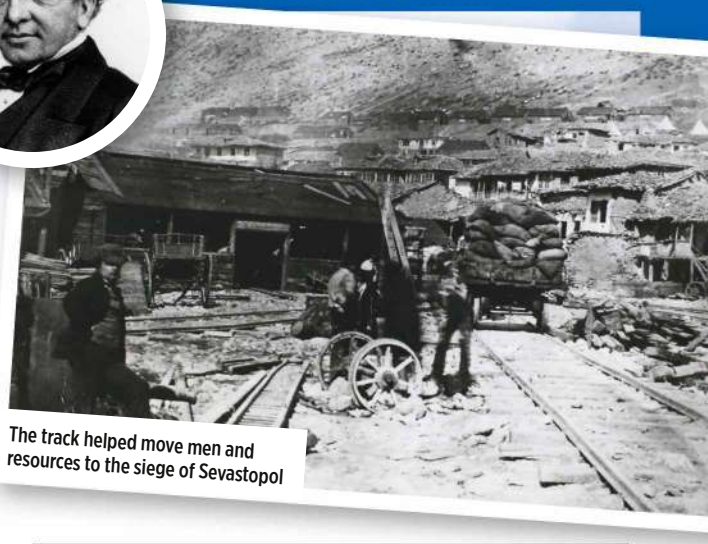
RAILWAYS

Samuel Morton Peto (*far left*) and his partner Edward Betts joined forces with Thomas Brassey (*left*) to build a short, but vital, railway line in the Crimea

The lengthy siege of Sevastopol presented the British military with a logistical headache. When its men and equipment arrived in the Crimea by ship, they disembarked at the port of Balaclava. Although the trenches surrounding Sevastopol were only 10 miles away, transporting the cargo – both human and mechanical – was exceedingly tricky. Not only were the weather conditions frequently atrocious, but the pitted and rough uphill terrain made for progress that was slow at best, and perilous at worst.

Help was on its way, though. Back in Britain, a pair of entrepreneurs, Samuel Morton Peto and Edward Betts, were among the pre-eminent railway builders of the Victorian age. Having read about the conditions in the Crimea in the eyewitness accounts of *The Times* correspondent William Howard Russell, Peto and Betts went into partnership with another railway man, Thomas Brassey, to propose the construction of a simple and effective line between Balaclava and the trenches above Sevastopol. This was no money-making scheme, incidentally, since the trio charged the British government only at cost price.

Progress was speedy, too: after the trains and track parts shipped in December 1854, the line was finished and fully functional within four months. Enjoying a rather high-falutin name, the Grand Crimean Central Railway contributed greatly to the ending of the siege; able to withstand the heavy rains to deliver arms, supplies and personnel to the trenches while returning sick and injured troops to Balaclava.



The track helped move men and resources to the siege of Sevastopol

PORTABLE STOVES

As if the fighting of the Crimean War hadn't claimed enough casualties, the death toll was being added to by allied troops falling gravely ill (particularly those in the British Army). One key reason was food poisoning. Soldiers were being catered for by those with little or no experience in cooking – let alone cooking en masse – and, accordingly, a frequently served dish of the day was undercooked meat.

Popularly regarded as the best chef in Britain, the Frenchman Alexis Soyer visited the troops in the Crimea and was shocked by the fare being served up. By then, he had already been developing a stove upon which food could be cooked properly whatever the location. In order to meet the needs of the British soldiers, the so-called Soyer Stove swiftly went into production. The celebrated chef also trained the cooks of each regiment how to provide solid, and more importantly non-dangerous, sustenance to their men.

Cases of food poisoning fell as a result and a version of the Soyer Stove would go on to be used by the British Army as recently as the Falklands War in 1982. As such, Soyer saved many lives. "War is the evil genius of a time," the Frenchman wrote in his memoir of his Crimean experience, *A Culinary Campaign* (1857), "but good food for all is a daily and paramount necessity."

MAIN: A version of the Soyer Stove, which helped British soldiers cook their meals and reduce the risk of food poisoning

BELOW: French chef Alexis Soyer was horrified by the fare being served up in allied camps in the Crimea

Laying telegraph cables revolutionised wartime communication by greatly speeding up the delivery of messages

TELEGRAPHY

The Crimean War saw the adoption of another new technology that modernised the processes and procedures of both warfare and the reporting of warfare: telegraphy. It revolutionised communication, whether between the front lines and governments, or between war correspondents and newspaper readers.

A crucial player in this revolution was RS Newall & Company, arguably the leaders in the manufacture and laying of submarine cables. In late 1854, the company was commissioned by the British government to connect, by electric telegraph, Balaclava with the port city of Varna on the western shore of the Black Sea (in modern-day Bulgaria). Two months later, the French and British agreed to connect their respective governments with their troops by constructing a new telegraph line between Varna and Bucharest, the latter being already connected to Paris and London.

Until then, communications from the sharp end of the war had taken up to five days before reaching the telegraph station in Bucharest, starting with a two-day steamer voyage from Balaclava to Varna that was then followed by a three-day horse ride. With a telegraph line now stretching from the front line right to Whitehall, communication was near-instant.

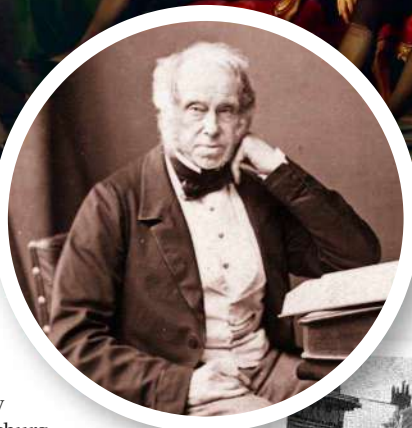
The British public, eager to learn of the latest developments from the Crimea, enjoyed this immediacy as they were now able to read the dispatches of Fleet Street's war correspondents soon after engagements had occurred. This exciting technological advance did carry a downside, though. Russian agents in London could update their superiors in St Petersburg through these fresh reports in the public press. ⊙

WORDS: NIGE TASSELL

PEACE AND PICKING UP THE PIECES

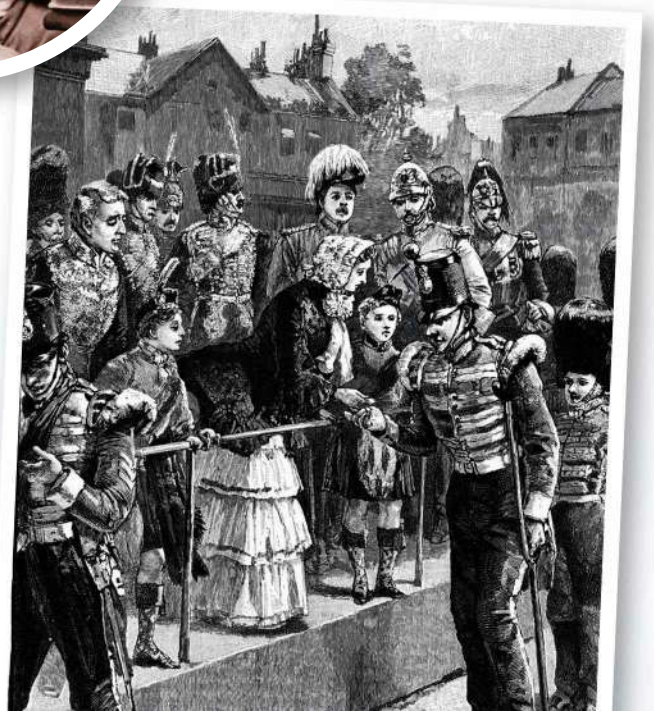
Professor Andrew Lambert explains how the Crimean War came to an end, and the effect it had on Europe and beyond

A painting of the 1856 peace talks in Paris, by French artist Édouard Dubufe. The Crimean War had ended, but it had left an indelible mark on Europe



LEFT: **Lord Palmerston, who became British prime minister in 1855, wanted to continue the war, but agreed to the French calls for peace**

BELOW: **An illustration depicts Queen Victoria awarding medals to veterans of the conflict**



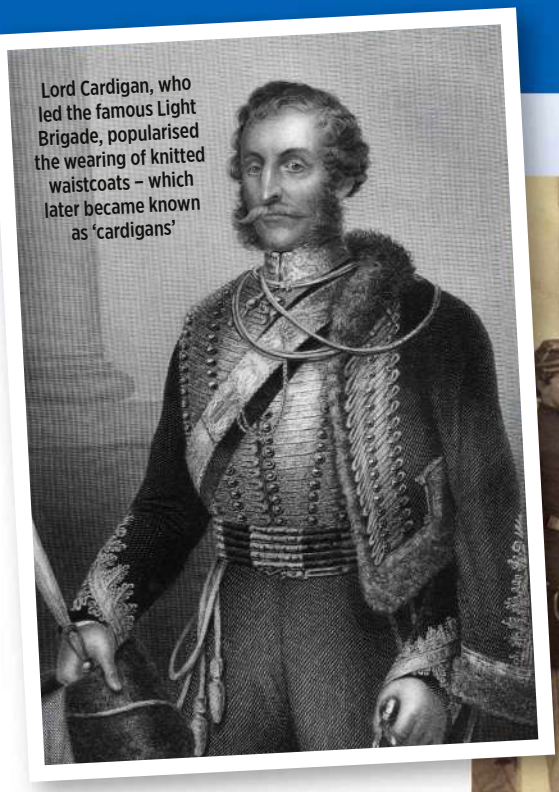
After a siege that lasted nearly 11 months, the fate of Sevastopol was settled when the Royal Navy occupied the Sea of Azov, cutting Russian supply lines to the Crimea. Without food, ammunition and fodder for the cavalry, Russia could no longer hold the fortress. It fell on 9 September 1855 after a brilliant French assault. This triumph was enough for Napoleon III: having restored military glory, he wanted to end the conflict and focus on redrawing the map of western Europe and expanding the borders of the French empire. Also, among his subjects, the war had become deeply unpopular as the human cost had mounted.

As for the British, they concentrated on destroying Sevastopol dockyard to ensure that Russia would not command the Black Sea for a generation. With Sevastopol lost, and Russia facing bankruptcy, domestic unrest and further defeats, the new tsar Alexander II was forced to admit defeat. Russia could not resist a sophisticated maritime-economic offensive that left the coast open to further attacks, including a widely publicised plan for the Royal Navy to escalate the war by bombarding St Petersburg the following spring. The pressure on Russia increased when Sweden joined the allied coalition in November 1855, and Austria threatened to follow. By early 1856, the tsar was ready to talk.

COMING TO TERMS

With the resulting Treaty of Paris, Russia recognised the political and territorial integrity of the Ottoman empire; demilitarised the Black Sea; gave up its claims to guarantee the civil rights of Christians in Ottoman areas; and opened the Danube River for international trade. Britain then demanded the demilitarisation of the Åland Islands, which enabled the Royal Navy to dominate the Baltic. The peace, however, came just as industrial mobilisation was

GETTY IMAGES X5, ALAMY X2



Lord Cardigan, who led the famous Light Brigade, popularised the wearing of knitted waistcoats – which later became known as 'cardigans'

Union soldiers pictured during the American Civil War (1861–65), wearing uniforms inspired by those worn by the French in the Crimea

transforming British strategic power. Prime Minister Lord Palmerston was left to regret lost opportunities to push Russia out of recently conquered regions in the Caucasus, the Baltic and beyond.

Signed on 30 March 1856, the treaty appeared to be a triumph for Napoleon III's empire. But the victory parade at Spithead on England's south coast three weeks later told a different story. Queen Victoria reviewed the fleet that had been assembled to attack St Petersburg, accompanied by diplomats, press reporters and large crowds. The unparalleled display of force served to emphasise that the war had been won by British maritime and economic power, with the support of French and Ottoman troops. It sustained British deterrence for decades: mobilising a 'Baltic' fleet halted Russian invasions of Turkey and Afghanistan in the years that followed. Britain would not have to fight another great power for 58 years, and so could focus on economic expansion and domestic reform.

REDRAWING THE MAP

In the Crimean War, the first major conflict of the industrial era, Britain and France dominated the seas with steam-powered ships and land battles with modern rifles – tools that Russia lacked. This was the first war when correspondents reported from the front line via telegraph cables and photographers captured images of conflict. It saw the first use of mass-produced weapons, armoured warships, submarine mines and railway lines. Britain's immense merchant fleet sustained campaigns in four distant theatres, while the war inspired the development of modern nursing and new items of clothing, including the cardigan and the balaclava. Elsewhere, the lessons of the war shaped the strategy, tactics and sartorial styles of the American Civil War shortly afterwards. In 1861, Union troops adopted the uniforms, *kepis* (caps) and facial hair of the elite French regiments that captured Sevastopol. In Britain, the ceremonial uniforms of the Guards, Horse Guards and Royal Horse Artillery remain those of the Crimea.

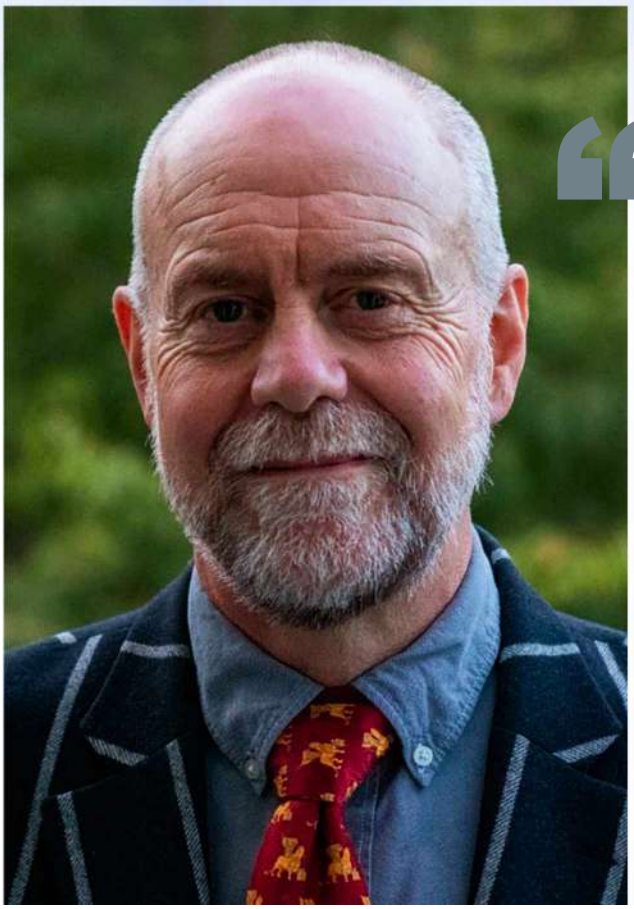
"BRITAIN WOULD NOT HAVE TO FIGHT ANOTHER GREAT POWER FOR 58 YEARS"

Russia ceased to be a great power for several decades, turning inwards to rebuild a shattered economy and build the industries and infrastructure for modern war, including the abolition of serfdom to release the necessary manpower. Russia's retreat opened the flood gates of nationalism in eastern and central Europe; the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia joined the Allies in 1855 to agitate for Italian unification, a project completed within a decade. Yet the most significant consequence of Russian weakness would be Otto von Bismarck's creation, in 1871, of a German empire that would dominate European politics for the next half century; a dominance founded on the ruins of Napoleon III's empire.

Still, Russia remained aggressive, seizing a huge block of territory from Imperial China in 1858 and continuing to advance against weaker foes in Central Asia until every independent regime between Moscow and the Chinese border was destroyed. Ultimately, it would be Russian ambitions in the Balkans that sparked World War I.

ANDREW LAMBERT is Laughton professor of naval history in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. His books include *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Routledge, 2020)

German statesman Otto von Bismarck (*left*) seized upon the changing climate in Europe after the Crimean War to build an empire that lasted until WWI



PROFESSOR ANDREW LAMBERT ON THE CRIMEAN WAR'S LEGACY

Russian empires have pushed south and west for the past 500 years

For many years, the Crimean War was remembered as a distant and chaotic conflict of no great importance. But when, in 2014, Vladimir Putin seized the Crimea and then followed that in 2022 with his invasion of Ukraine, he reminded the world that Russian empires have pushed south and west for the past 500 years, subjugating other peoples to enhance their own security.

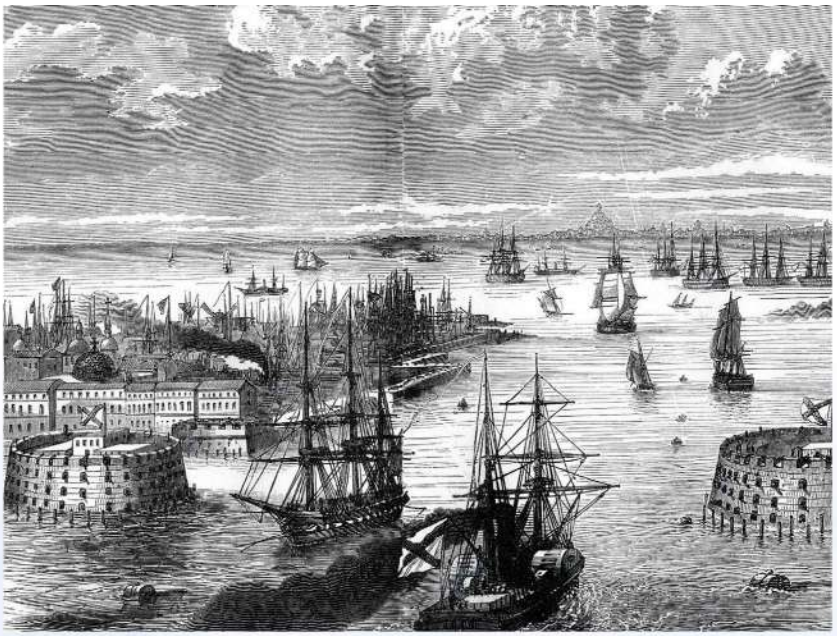
It had been the unprovoked seizure of two Turkish provinces in 1853 that started the first great power conflict in Europe since 1815. British ministers had long anticipated the attack, and supported the victim, so along with France they gave Russia one last chance to avoid war. This was ignored, so the Anglo-French declaration of war came in late March 1854. In the end, Russia was defeated in a war that stretched across four theatres – the Pacific, the Black and White Seas, and the Baltic – with the allies relying on British maritime strategy, combining economic warfare with coastal attacks. The Crimean campaign was intended to destroy Russia's Black Sea fleet and naval base at Sevastopol, thus preventing them from seizing Constantinople (now Istanbul).

The conflict was a clash of cultures: on one side was an autocratic military state built on conscript armies, censorship and internal surveillance, which was defeated by a coalition of progressive western states, relatively inclusive politics and technologically advanced economies. While Russia suppressed news of defeats, incompetence and casualties, Britain's war was conducted with maximum disclosure through the House of Commons and a free press. An upshot of this resulting war of words was an enduring, if misleading, impression of failure in Britain – widely attributed to amateurish aristocratic leaders – while highlighting the contribution of figures such as Florence Nightingale. It is high time the grotesque caricature of the Crimean War as restricted to a series of blundering military operations outside Sevastopol be laid to rest.

In the 21st century, Russia's attacks on Georgia and Ukraine have attempted to restore the nation's control over its old empire, and have revived the aggressive rhetoric of faith and nationalism that shaped decisions back in 1853. Putin's politics rely on war, anxiety, conquest and the exploitation of the powerful presence of the Crimean War in Russian culture. (Leo Tolstoy's experiences at Sevastopol, for example, shaped the battle scenes in his epic *War and Peace*.) As with 1853–56, the events of 2022 have exposed Russia's economic and technological weaknesses and its dependence on foreign capital, technology and markets.

The Crimean War was won by applying economic pressure, blocking bulky Russian exports and denying the Russians access to international capital markets. Faced with mounting losses, humiliating defeats, bankruptcy and a growing coalition of enemies, the regime realised its survival depended on making peace. I doubt anything has changed.

ANDREW LAMBERT is Laughton professor of naval history in the Department of War Studies at King's College London. His books include *The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56* (Routledge, 2020). To hear Professor Lambert discuss the Crimean War on the *HistoryExtra* podcast, visit *historyextra.com/crimean-war-qa*



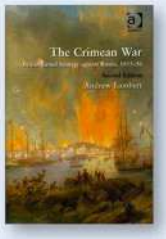
GETTY IMAGES X2

Applying economic pressure and blocking bulky Russian exports helped win the war, says Professor Lambert

GET HOOKED

If we've whetted your appetite for all things Crimean War, why not explore the topic further with our pick of books, films, TV programmes and podcasts?

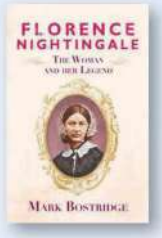
BOOKS



The Crimean War: British Grand Strategy against Russia, 1853–56

By Prof Andrew Lambert (Routledge, 2020)

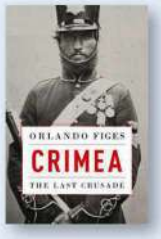
Lambert's study explores the development and implementation of national policy and strategy during the Crimean War, focusing on naval operations rather than those on land.



Florence Nightingale: The Woman and Her Legend

By Mark Bostridge (Viking, 2008)

In what was, at the time of its publication, the first major biography of Florence Nightingale in over 50 years, Bostridge draws on unpublished material to throw significant new light on the nurse's extraordinary life.



Crimea: The Last Crusade

By Prof Orlando Figes (Allen Lane, 2010)

Drawing on untapped Russian and Ottoman as well as European sources, Figes vividly depicts the world at war: from the grand palaces of St Petersburg to the ordinary Crimean towns suffering under siege.

Shadows of War: Roger Fenton's Photographs of the Crimea, 1855

By Dr Sophie Gordon (Royal Collection Trust, 2017)

This book brings together some 350 works by the pioneering Crimean War photographer Roger Fenton, along with text highlighting the impact that his images had on people back in Britain.

ON THE BBC

BBC RADIO 4 — NEW SERIES

▶ The Invention of Russia

Series begins on Monday 9 January

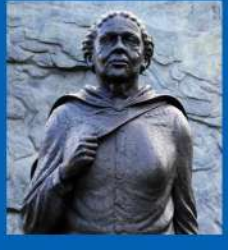
Misha Glenny (*pictured*) will be exploring Russia's history in this new four-part series – from the rise of Moscow, to the threat of invasion. Turn to page 74 for more information.

BBC RADIO 4

▶ In Our Time: The Charge of the Light Brigade

bbc.co.uk/programmes/b008md8x

Melvyn Bragg and guests discuss the Charge of the Light Brigade and its iconic status in the British historical imagination.



BBC SOUNDS

▶ You're Dead To Me: Mary Seacole

bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p0b2bjb6

Greg Jenner is joined by Prof Gretchen Gerzina and comedian Nathan Caton to delve into the extraordinary life and adventures of 19th-century celebrity Mary Seacole.

ONLINE AND AUDIO

▶ For podcasts, features, quizzes, interviews and more on the Crimean War, scan the QR code shown right, or visit *historyextra.com/crimean-war*

▶ The Crimean War: everything you wanted to know

Prof Andrew Lambert answers listener questions about the conflict of 1853–56. Listen at *bit.ly/3tJyjzD*

▶ Your 60-second guide to the Crimean War

Need-to-know facts about the Crimean War, from religious tensions to the battle of Balaclava in October 1854. Read at *bit.ly/3TJmWSY*

▶ The life and legend of Florence Nightingale

Mark Bostridge reflects on the pioneering nurse's work during the Crimean War and beyond. Listen at *bit.ly/3GxJenE*

WATCH

In the Shadow of Mary Seacole

(streaming on various platforms)

This 2016 documentary sees actor David Harewood delve into the story of nursing legend Mary Seacole, examining her place in black British history today.

The Charge of the Light Brigade

(streaming on various platforms)

Starring John Gielgud and Vanessa Redgrave, this 1968 war film offers a satirical take on the events surrounding one of Britain's worst military failures.

GETTY IMAGES X6

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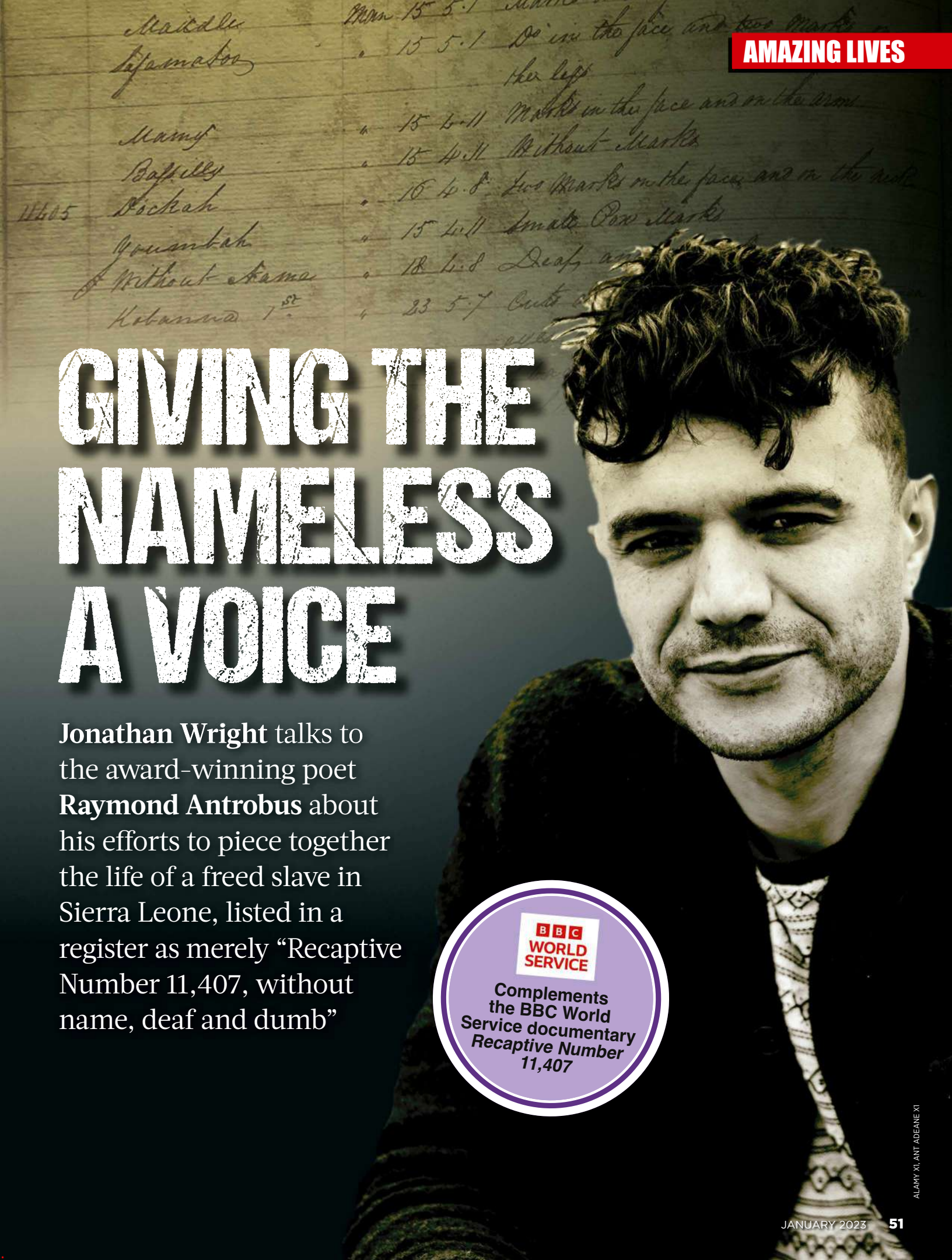
GIVING THE NAMELESS A VOICE

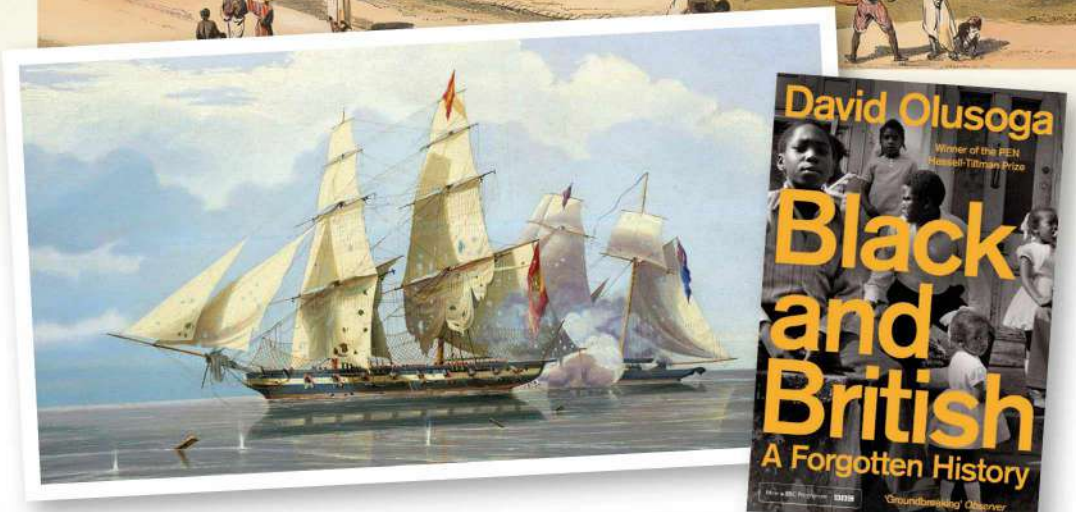
Jonathan Wright talks to the award-winning poet **Raymond Antrobus** about his efforts to piece together the life of a freed slave in Sierra Leone, listed in a register as merely "Recaptive Number 11,407, without name, deaf and dumb"



BBC WORLD SERVICE

Complements the BBC World Service documentary *Recaptive Number 11,407*

ALAMY X1, ANT ADEANE X1



In 1807, parliament passed a law prohibiting the slave trade within the British empire. But how was this to be policed? In 1808, Britain sent two ships to patrol off the coast of West Africa, with the aim of suppressing the transatlantic slave trade. The Royal Navy's West Africa Squadron, also known as the Preventative Squadron, was born.

Historians have long debated its effectiveness, but over the course of half a century, it seized around 1,600 ships involved in the trade in enslaved people, and freed around 150,000 Africans. The squadron was based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, the capital of British West Africa from 1808–74. It was here that many freed slaves made landfall and, rather than returning to the places from which they were taken, also made new lives.

The Registers of Liberated Africans, held by the Public Archives of Sierra Leone, offer an extraordinary record of these rescued people: details such as their ages, sex and height, but also whether they had scars or other body markings. One entry in particular has long fascinated award-winning deaf poet Raymond Antrobus. Referring to a young man rescued in 1818, it simply reads "Receptive Number 11,407, without name, deaf and dumb".

Antrobus tells us about his trip to Freetown, a journey undertaken for a BBC World Service documentary and to answer a deceptively simple question: "How do I honour the history of someone who has been almost completely lost?"

Q How did your documentary, *Receptive Number 11,407*, first come about?

A A few years ago, I read David Olusoga's *Black and British: A Forgotten History*, in which he writes about Sierra Leone and the Registers of Liberated Africans. He points out that Receptive Number 11,407 had been deaf and dumb, but he puts it in there and just moves on. It really resonated with me – I was like, "Wait, whoa!" It was kind of like being jolted.

The story just stayed with me. I started applying for research grants to go to Sierra Leone, but nobody would give me any money to do it. The feedback was either we don't understand why this story is relevant, or because there's not a name on this person, you're just going to go there and find a dead end. My hunch was that this was not true.

Eventually, I met radio producer Ant Adeane. We collaborated on a pitch for the story and took it to the BBC. With delays because of Covid-19, the documentary ended up being more than six-and-a-half years in the making!

TOP: **After being released from slavery, Receptive Number 11,407 was taken to Freetown in Sierra Leone – depicted here in the mid-19th century**

ABOVE LEFT: **The slave ship *Formidable* being captured by HMS *Buzzard*, 1834. Around 1,600 slaving vessels were seized by Britain's Royal Navy between 1807 and 1860**

ABOVE RIGHT: **Poet Raymond Antrobus first discovered a reference to 11,407 in David Olusoga's 2016 book *Black and British: A Forgotten History***

Q Before you went to Sierra Leone, you started off your research in Greenwich. What was the reason for that?

A We knew there were illustrations of ships that were in the first West African Squadron at the National Maritime Museum. This was launched to intercept ships that were illegally carrying on slavery. These words are so strange when you look at the history: if slavery is still going on, it's not post-slavery – and the idea of 'legal' slavery is ridiculous. We also went to Greenwich to ground the idea that the story we were telling was a British story. The fact that HMS *Cherub* – which intercepted the slave ship carrying the person we were looking for – was documented at the National Maritime Museum meant there was no ambiguity about this.

It's an unusual historical era. Prior to the buying and selling of slaves being made illegal in the British empire in 1807, the Royal Navy actually protected the transatlantic slave trade. There are so many different contexts, and different people with their own agendas and different points, that it's hard to piece together a clean and cohesive narrative. But what struck me about this particular story is that you can zero in on this one entry without a name and you can just keep looking. Indeed, once we got to

GETTY IMAGES X1, ALAMY X1, ANT ADEANE X3

LIBERATED AFRICAN REGISTER
NOV 1816 TO FEB 1819
NOS 9759 - 11005
No. Name. Sex. Age. Stature. Description.
In what Ship, or Where seized. Date of Delivery. Date of Condem.
In what Court Condemned. For what Crime Condemned. At whose Suit Condemned.
Deaf and Dumb

ABOVE: **Raymond managed to track down the original register entry for Recaptive Number 11,407 while visiting the Public Archives of Sierra Leone**

RIGHT: **The poet (*second from left*) also met up with four members of Sierra Leone's Association of the Deaf to learn more about the lives of deaf people in the country today**

Sierra Leone, it didn't take much time in the archives to find another clue that we hadn't yet come across in the registers. I imagine a lot of people who spend time researching experience this; a kind of mystical connection that feels coincidental, but then also feels like something else in the universe is making a connection for you.

Q What was it like seeing the archives in Freetown? You talk a lot about the weight of the registers in different ways at this point in the documentary, and yet these are brittle, aged documents...

A I picked up another register in the archives that had the names of all the Sierra Leoneans who signed up to fight in the two world wars. There were thousands of names, many teenagers. The document was just lying in a stack, handwritten. Not all the records there have been digitised yet, so it feels very much like being in a room of memories that are prone to fade. To this day, people from the African diaspora rely on the registers to track their ancestors.

Q Turning directly to Recaptive Number 11,407, did you find out more about him in the archives and where he went?

A There are multiple reasons why this person would have been almost impossible to find. Not just because his name wasn't recorded, but because he was African – 'subhuman' in the eyes of many at the time. In fact, his disability made him another kind of categorisation of 'subhuman'. However, when we visited the area of Freetown where Recaptive Number 11,407 was sent – a district of the city named Kissy – we had an incredibly powerful experience in the local parish church.

"TO THIS DAY, PEOPLE FROM THE AFRICAN DIASPORA RELY ON THE REGISTERS TO TRACK THEIR ANCESTORS"

The sermon was being transcribed on screens and we wondered what was going on. We found out that the church had been opened by a deaf man in the early 1800s, the Reverend Wensel, at the same time that the man we were looking for would have come off the ship. Of course, we'll never know if Recaptive Number 11,407 ever attended the church, but I felt like we had, in some way, tapped into his life, his time, his trail – and it led us there.

At the end of our trip, we couldn't point at a grave and say, "This is the person without a name," but it was the fact that we even found a path that wasn't completely sealed up that was so important. We went further than anyone anticipated.

GET HOOKED

BBC WORLD SERVICE

The BBC World Service documentary *Recaptive Number 11,407* is now available to stream on BBC Sounds: *bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/w3ct4kr3*

A subtitled version is also available on YouTube: *youtube.com/watch?v=TsG4IZtG9n4*

WHAT GREAT PAINTINGS SAY

Giuseppe Arcimboldo's playful depiction of Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II carries deeper messages of power and status

Vertumnus

by Giuseppe Arcimboldo, c1590–91

From grapes and pears to onions and olives, Giuseppe Arcimboldo's colourful depiction of Vertumnus, the Etruscan god of the seasons, is a veritable feast for the eyes. What makes it even more remarkable, though, is that the artist brought together the vast selection of fruits, flowers and vegetables to create a portrait of one of the most powerful and influential men of the 16th century: Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II.

"Rudolf II was an outstanding collector and patron of art, and he surrounded himself with an array of artists, including Arcimboldo," says Ann-Cathrin Rothlind, paintings conservator at National Historical Museums, Stockholm. "The figure and symbolism of Vertumnus is a complicated and multi-layered one," she continues. "He is a god of change, of the seasons and nature, and, in a way, a symbol of an everlasting spring. By depicting Rudolf II as a god of change and abundance, Arcimboldo created a visual representation of the golden age that is said to have returned with the emperor's reign."

PEELING BACK THE LAYERS

By the time Arcimboldo created *Vertumnus* and its partner image, *Flora*, he had already served as court painter for two other Holy Roman emperors: Ferdinand I in Vienna and Rudolf's father, Maximilian II, in Prague. But it is for his remarkable composite images – a clever merging of traditional portraiture with still life – that he is best remembered.

"Arcimboldo's composite portraits were seen as playful jokes or illusions with a serious undertone," continues Rothlind. "As well as being images of new and known naturalia, they contain emblems and symbols with historical significance. The floral garland, for example, has been carefully arranged as a representation of the ribbon of the Order of the Golden Fleece [an order of chivalry that belonged to the Habsburg royal dynasty]."

The piece is comprised entirely of produce that ripen or flower at various times throughout the year, gathered here in perfect harmony – an artistic reflection of Rudolf's own harmonious reign. The result is a treat for the eyes, but in an era where public image was everything, how did the emperor feel about being depicted with pea pod eyelids, a pear for a nose, and a rosy apple cheek?

"Arcimboldo had worked for the Habsburg court for many years and had produced several other composite images, including *The Librarian*, most likely a painting of Wolfgang Lazius, official historian and director of the imperial library," comments Rothlind. "*Flora* – a portrait of a woman made up of flowers, fruits, vegetables – had already been presented to Rudolf, and the emperor was very much looking forward to receiving Arcimboldo's next work. It is said that he was extremely amused when he was presented with the painting, and a type of explanatory poem, written by the Italian poet Gregorio Comanini, was read aloud to assist with the interpretation of the portrait. Arcimboldo himself had retired to Milan by this time and was not at court when the piece was presented to the emperor."

There is still debate as to some of the hidden meanings behind the inclusion of specific fruits and vegetables, and what parts of the painting, if any, Arcimboldo intended to be a joke. The ears of corn on the side of his head could be purely coincidental, as could the use of a melon for his forehead. What does appear to be deliberate, though, is the inclusion of produce that had begun making its way to Europe from the New World, a nod to the emperor's power and wealth. The corncob, on the left side of his head, was a crop that originated in North America.

Much as it did in the 16th century, Arcimboldo's work continues to delight and intrigue viewers as they try and make sense of its many meanings. In the words of Comanini: "Though my aspect may be monstrous, I bear noble traits within." ⊙

WORDS: CHARLOTTE HODGMAN

JENS MOHR, SKOKLOSTER CASTLE/SHM

1. CHILLI PEPPERS

Christopher Columbus and his crew had brought chilli peppers back to Europe on their second journey to the Americas, in 1493.

2. TULIPS

Humanist, physician and botanist Charles de l'Ecluse was director of the Holy Roman emperor's garden in Vienna from 1573–87, where he cultivated, among other things, tulips.

3. ANCIENT ORIGINS

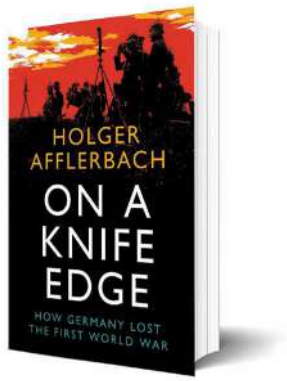
The placement of many of the fruits and vegetables included in the image seem to follow a description of Vertumnus in book four of the ancient Roman poet Propertius's *Elegies*.

GET HOOKED

Vertumnus is currently located at Skokloster Castle in Sweden. The castle is closed during the winter season but is open on selected weekends in the spring and daily during the summer months. Visit the castle's website for more information: *skoklostersslott.se/en*

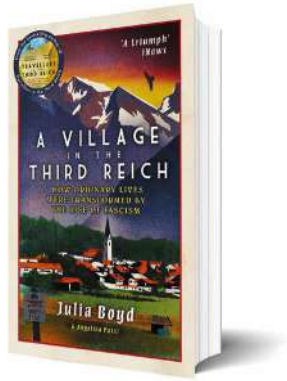
BOOKS OF 2022

Image: Shutterstock



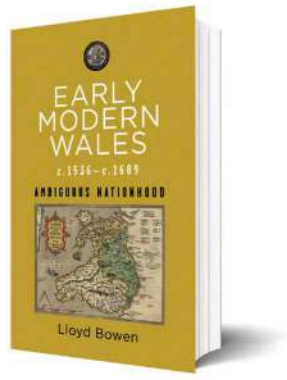
On a Knife Edge
Holger Afflerbach
cambridge.org/OnAKnifeEdge

A fundamental reassessment of how Germany lost the First World War. Using diaries, letters and memoirs of key actors and decision-makers, Holger Afflerbach reveals the internal power struggles in Germany and how they influenced decisively the outcome of the war. The book shows that the war could have gone the other way.



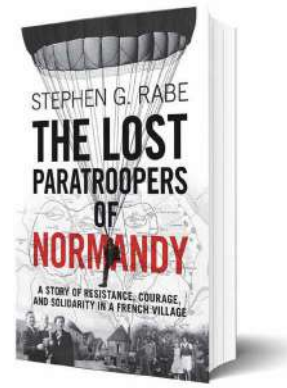
A Village in the Third Reich
Julia Boyd
Available from Waterstones.com

Even the remote village of Oberstdorf, hidden in the Bavarian mountains, could not escape the iron grip of the Nazi regime. From the author of the bestselling *Travellers in the Third Reich* comes *A Village in the Third Reich* by Julia Boyd, an extraordinarily intimate portrait of Germany under Hitler that shines a light on the lives of ordinary people.



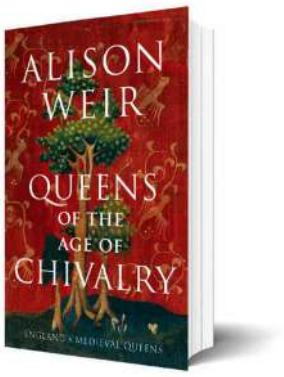
Early Modern Wales, c1536–c1689
Lloyd Bowen
uwp.co.uk/book/early-modern-wales-c1536-c1689/

This is the first general history of early modern Wales for a generation. It provides a novel and compelling discussion of Wales under the Tudor and Stuart dynasties. In addition to accounts of Wales's incorporation into the British state, and its role during the Reformation and civil wars, the book also examines neglected topics such as gender, Britishness and Welsh migrations.



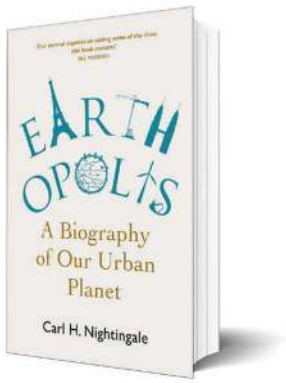
The Lost Paratroopers of Normandy
Stephen G Rabe
cambridge.org/LostParatroopers

The inspiring and unknown story of how the villagers of Graignes joined in solidarity with US paratroopers following the invasion of Normandy. Inspired by his own father's experience, Stephen G Rabe recounts how the villagers supported and saved paratroopers from marauding Nazi SS forces in the post-D-Day period.



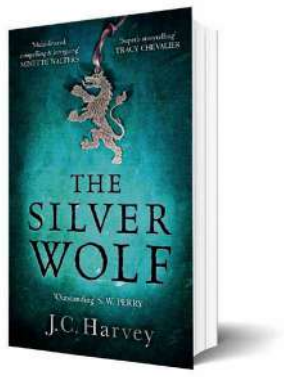
Queens of the Age of Chivalry
Alison Weir
https://l.linklyhq.com/l/1ZR6G

Queens of the Age of Chivalry is a sweeping and magisterial history chronicling a turbulent, brutal period from 1299 to 1409, which witnessed the Black Death, the Peasants' Revolt, the Hundred Years' War and savage baronial wars in England. Using personal letters and vivid sources, Weir evokes the lives of five remarkable Plantagenet queens: Marguerite of France, Isabella of France, Philippa of Hainault, Anne of Bohemia and Isabella of Valois.



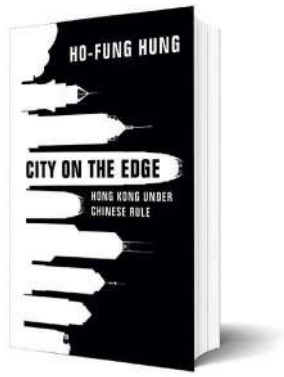
Earthopolis
Carl Nightingale
cambridge.org/Earthopolis

Carl Nightingale takes readers on a six-continent, six-millennia tour of the world's cities, revealing how they gave humans immense power over Earth, for good and for bad. Learn all about the only urban planet we know, in this biography of our home, *Earthopolis*.



The Silver Wolf
JC Harvey
amzn.to/3TjUqXK

Longlisted for the HWA Debut Fiction Crown, *The Silver Wolf* is an extraordinarily rich, dark, panoramic tale of an orphaned boy's search for truth and vengeance amidst the chaos of the Thirty Years' War. Swept from France to Amsterdam and onto the battlefields of Germany, can Jack Fiskardo unravel the mystery of his father's death? Or will his father's killers find him first...? The first novel in an unforgettable new series, perfect for readers of Ken Follett and Kate Mosse.



City on the Edge
Ho-Fung Hung
cambridge.org/CityOnTheEdge

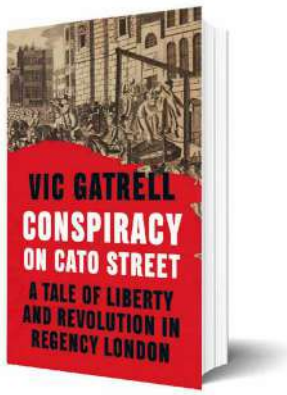
A comprehensive and timely account of Hong Kong's development from precolonial times to the present. Ho-Fung Hung looks at the 2019 unrest in Hong Kong within the context of global finance and the geopolitics of the US-China rivalry in its long struggle for autonomy and democracy.

West Wind Clear
VM Knox
tinyurl.com/37rn7yh5

By late 1941, the Pacific is a very different place and Japan threatens the security of the region. As Clement is preparing to return to Britain from Australia, he is seconded to lead a small guerrilla force to Singapore where he is to rescue an important man who is carrying a vital secret. After the apparent suicide of one of his team, Clement becomes suspicious that an enemy spy is among them; one who will kill to safeguard his identity.

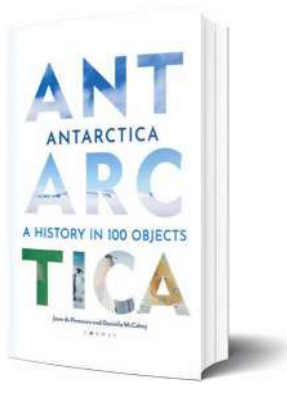
Conquer We Must
Robin Prior
bit.ly/ConquerWeMust

In the intensely violent era of the First and Second World Wars, how did Britain develop successful military strategy and secure victory? In the first history to consider both wars together, Robin Prior explores the fraught relationship between Britain's generals and civilian leadership – and numerous disagreements in strategy with its allies. Prior reveals the complex narrative of military and political decision-making which defined the world's most turbulent conflicts.



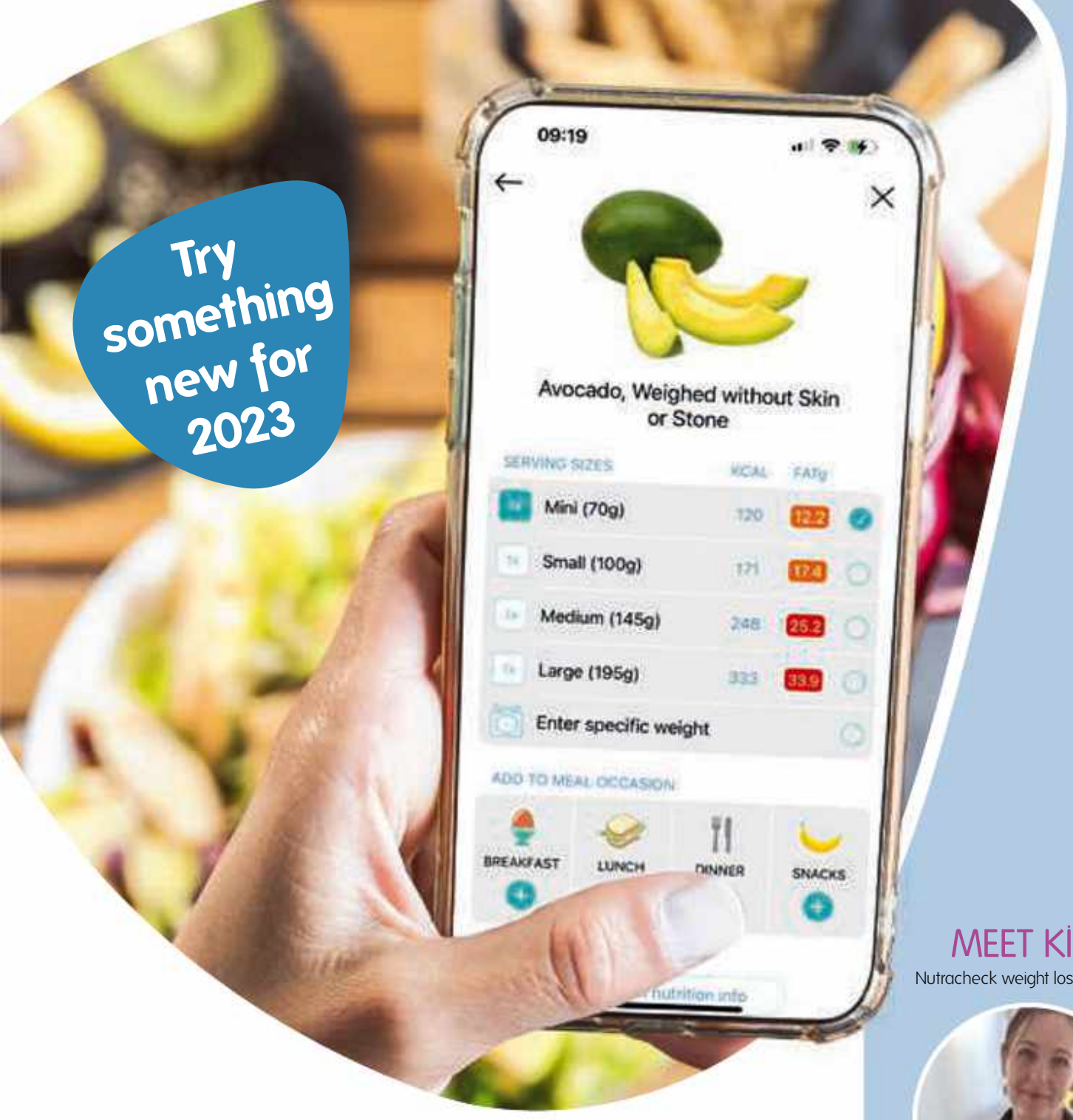
Conspiracy on Cato Street
cambridge.org/CatoStreet

The Cato Street Conspiracy was the most sensational of all plots aimed at the British state since the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. Vic Gatrell tells this dramatic but neglected story with cinematic vividness, episodic range, and a tragic denouement that undermines our romantic fantasies about Regency England.



Antarctica: A History in 100 Objects
Jean de Pomereu & Daniella McCahey
tinyurl.com/49ah7n3h

When you think Antarctica, do you think sledges and fur coats? What about whale bones? Dynamite? Champagne? Or even a wedding dress? Find out what these objects have to do with the world's most isolated continent. This powerfully relevant new book tells the story of Antarctica through a collection of fascinating artefacts from around the world. The perfect gift for historians, science fans and polar enthusiasts.



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MAIN: **Early female tattoo artist Maud Wagner goes under the needle**

BOTTOM LEFT: **A woman prepares for a large tattoo on her back in Japan, 1940**

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Tattoos were common among sailors during World War II**

PAINTED PEOPLE

PODCAST

Dr Matt Lodder discusses the history of tattooing on the *HistoryExtra* podcast. FInd out more at: *historyextra.com/podcasts*

From religious and cultural practices, to acts of sedition, the art of tattooing dates back many thousands of years. **Dr Matt Lodder**, author of a new book on tattoo history, shares the incredible stories of 11 inked individuals

GETTY IMAGES X3

The naturally mummified remains of Ötzi, with tattoos visible on his back. A full reconstruction of the 'iceman' is on show at the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano, Italy (*inset, left*)

ÖTZI AND THE GEBELEIN MAN

Buried in ice and desert respectively more than 5,000 years ago, these natural mummies were preserved – as were their tattoos

▲ The oldest preserved tattoos yet discovered are on Ötzi, the so-called 'Iceman' excavated from the Alpine permafrost at the border between Austria and Italy in 1991. Ötzi lived around 5,300 years ago during the early Bronze Age, and his serendipitously preserved body is covered with 61 small tattoo marks made with ash. Since next to nothing is known about Ötzi's cultural tradition, deciphering his tattoos with any certainty is not possible, but the dashes and crosses are tattooed primarily on sites of the body where he seemed to have suffered from particular ailments, inflammation or pain. Their locations suggest that they may have served some magical or medical purpose, intended to ease pain or invoke healing perhaps.

Of a similar age is the Gebelein Man, who lived in predynastic Egypt, just prior to the rule of the first pharaoh. Like Ötzi, his body was preserved by lucky accident in the desiccation of the North African desert, and – also like Ötzi – he was tattooed. While the body was brought to the British Museum in 1899 and been on display ever since, it was only recently, in 2018, that modern imaging techniques finally revealed his tattooing. On his arms, the Gebelein Man sports a lively image of a bull and another of a sheep, perhaps symbols of allegiance, masculine bravado, or local fashion.

As new scanning techniques evolve and new technologies are developed, scientists are discovering more and more permanent marks on preserved human bodies from history, frequently adding data points to our understanding of the deep history of the intimate art of tattooing.

The Gebelein Man's tattoos, the earliest-known figures, were only revealed thanks to infrared imaging

A 2003 stamp depicting Chinese hero Yue Fei receiving his patriotic tattoo from his mother

YUE FEI

The Chinese general's ink was an unimpeachable (and lawful) sign of his commitment to his nation

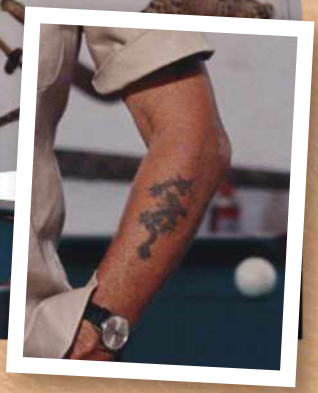
▲ Yue Fei is one of China's greatest national heroes: an 11th-century general who led armies of the Song Dynasty into battle against rival northern tribes. He has become something of a quasi-mythical figure, said to have possessed super-human strength and a mastery of archery, martial arts and spear fighting.

One of the key scenes in Yue Fei's life story tells of how he was tattooed by his mother, who supposedly wept profoundly as she took her embroidery needle and inscribed on his back the characters 'Serve the country with utmost loyalty'. To be tattooed was unusual, since the Han Chinese had no mainstream tradition of the art, but in the narrative of his heroism that served as a stark illustration of just how profoundly he was committed to the national project. In carrying out the tattoo, his mother also symbolically gave him to the country, relinquishing her maternal bond and replacing it with one of unending devotion to the cause of China.

Many years later, the stories claim, Yue Fei was brought to court on trumped-up charges of treason by a rival seeking to defame him. In a dramatic moment of legal theatrics, Yue Fei's shirt billowed up to reveal the tattoo. The words on his back convinced the judge that Yue Fei, far from being treasonous, was fiercely loyal and, by the same token, that his accuser was lying.

GETTY IMAGES X3, ALAMY X3, THE NICKERSON ARGOSY (NICKERSON, KANSAS), 3 OCTOBER 1901 X1

Joe Carstairs poses with the mementoes and trophies of a colourful life on her private Bahamas island in 1964, one of her sailor tattoos visible



JOE CARSTAIRS

An adventurer and speedster, Joe proudly tattooed her arms in a display of masculinity, making her a genderqueer icon

▲ The British heiress – and step-daughter of a doctor who injected the testicular pulp of monkeys into his patients in futile experiments to boost virility – Joe Carstairs was a swashbuckling, genderqueer pioneer; a lover of Greta Garbo and Marlene Dietrich. Though many society ladies had been delicately tattooed through the late-19th and early 20th centuries, Joe took up bold sailor tattooing, the perfect addition to a look that actively sought to present as masculine.

During the 1920s and '30s, Joe, with her tattooed arms, proudly challenged gender stereotypes, becoming a professional powerboat racer, setting speed records and ultimately buying an island in the Bahamas over which she ruled. Her story is illustrative of wider conversations in history and in the present day about class, gender, self-fashioning, and the interrelation between our bodies, our identities, and our minds.

DID YOU KNOW?

WRITTEN IN INK

While the voyages of Captain James Cook are usually cited as bringing the art of tattooing from the Pacific Islands to Europe, there is evidence this had happened much earlier. He did, however, bring the word 'tattoo', from the Samoan 'tatau'.

MADELINE ALTMAN

The teenage girl hoped her tattoos would help her join the navy, but instead she wound up in a correctional institution

CRAZY SUMMER FAD.

Lovers' Initials Tattoed on Pretty Maidens' Arms.

Some Employ an Old Sailor to Do the Work, Others Turn the Job Over to the Genial Boys of the Sea.

(Special New York Letter.)

THE old sailor in the little shop in the Bowery looked up from his work mending the mizzen jack. A young woman dressed in a fluffy summer gown had darkened the doorway. The tar knew what she wanted before she spoke. He tossed the folds of the flag from off his lap revealing a timber leg—a good old fashioned wooden stump—not one of the new-tangled affairs made of rods and springs and encircled to deceive. That he was a salt of the old school was indicated by his look and actions. His very accent brought visions of the sea and the fading outlines of white sails against the horizon of blue.

The shop was a mere hole in the wall. There was a chair or two inside and the bench on which the old sailorman sat. A few sharp-pointed needles were in a cushion on a low table, and arranged in a semicircle about them were a half dozen sticks of India ink. These alone would have told the occupation of the sailor. If not, the decorations on the walls, which consisted of pictures of human limbs covered with various

LATEST FAD OF GOTHAM'S SMART SET.

▼ In 1906, a young, sassy runaway called Madeline Altman was picked up by the New York Children's Society, having been found in a Bowery saloon with her chest bandaged, her arms swollen, and covered in sailor tattoos. The daughter of an insurance salesman, the 15-year-old Altman had grown so enamoured of romantic tales of life at sea that she longed to join the navy – getting tattoos and dressing as a boy to better her chances. The tattoo artists who marked her were variously imprisoned and fined, but to cure her 'sea-madness' required a desperate measure.

Altman was sent to the House of Mercy, an austere correctional institution intended to educate and reform young women from their moral transgressions. It is unknown precisely what befell her, although contemporary reports tell of gagging, humiliation, head-shaving and force-feeding. Her story offers a glimpse into the brutal realities of early 20th-century attitudes to childhood, moral and physical health, and the acceptable limits of young women and girls.

An article in *Woman and Home*, from October 1901, explores the early 20th-century fashion for young girls to get tattooed

JANE AND MARY

Mistaken as members of a gang, the case of two London women highlights the link made in the 19th century between tattoos and crime

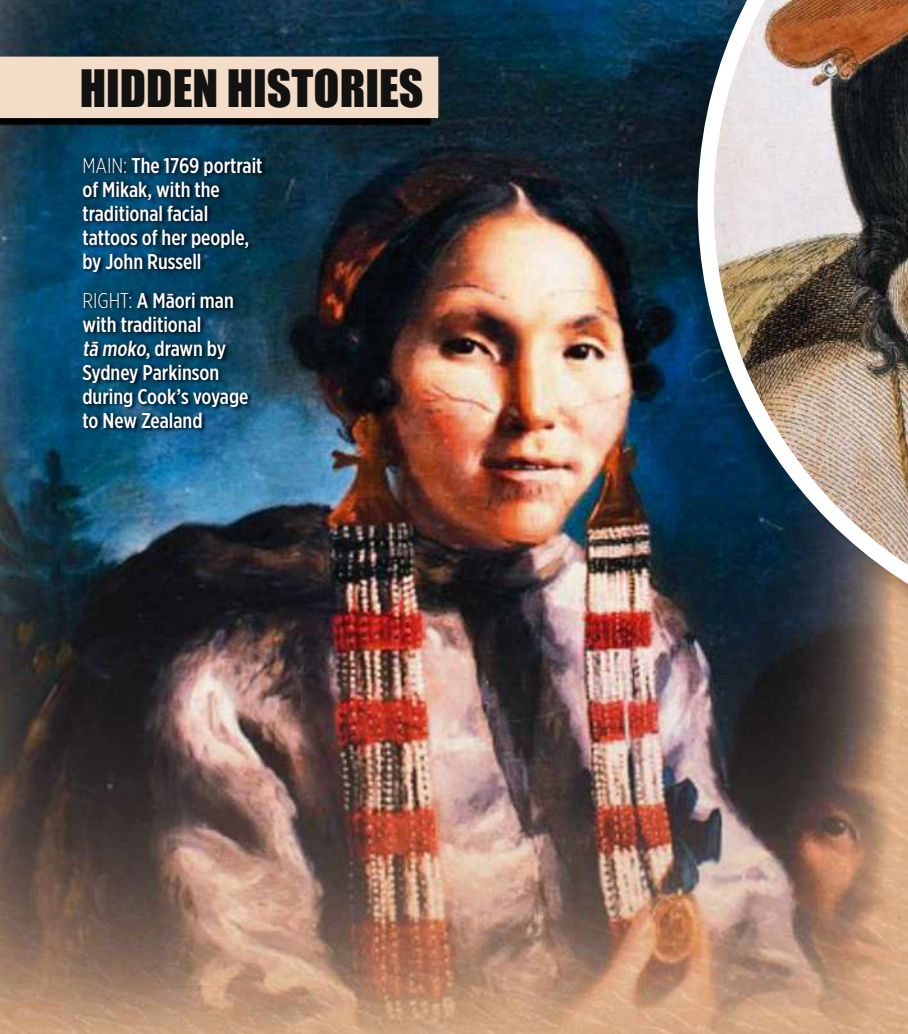
▼ To this day, and despite its surging popularity, tattooing can still conjure up in the imagination an idea of criminality. This is something of a recent association, however. The link between tattoos and crime really only solidified in the 19th century, as early criminologists – such as Cesare Lombroso in Italy, Alexandre Lacassagne in France and social reformer Havelock Ellis in England – sought to explore the relationship between the human body and the mind and character.

While the notion that physical disfigurement was somehow indicative of moral failure has a long history, by the 19th century it had intertwined with racialised theories of cultural evolution, giving rise to the belief that criminal tendencies could be divined from studying things such as the shape of someone's head. In a similar vein, tattooing had become increasingly associated with 'primitivism' in the aftermath of European encounters with Pacific peoples, and so tattooed people were said to be atavistic and less evolved than those without tattoos. For some criminologists, the presence of tattooing was enough to declare that someone was a latent criminal, even if they had not committed a crime.

In Dickensian-era London, at a time when tattooing among the poor was growing in fashion, this apparent link generated a veritable moral panic about the so-called 'Gang of Forty Thieves', discernible by the distinctive mark on their bodies. In one notable case, two women – Jane White and Mary Cunningham – were arrested for robbing a naive man down in London for business. They sozzled him with drink, pulled his trousers down, and nabbed his purse before he knew what was happening.

When Jane and Mary were arrested in 1838, their tattoos were taken as proof that they were members of the Forty Thieves. It took a savvy gaoler, Mr Waddington, to point out that no such gang existed, and the fact tattooed people were often in court did not mean they all knew each other. The 'mark', far from being distinctive, was actually a huge range of symbols and designs. Simply, many people had tattoos – and some were criminals.

An illustration of examples of convict tattoos in the 19th century, when ink was seen as proof of criminality



MAIN: **The 1769 portrait of Mikak, with the traditional facial tattoos of her people, by John Russell**

RIGHT: **A Māori man with traditional *tā moko*, drawn by Sydney Parkinson during Cook's voyage to New Zealand**

MIKAK

Before news of Captain Cook's voyages to the Pacific spread, a tattooed Inuit woman was brought to England

▲ Mikak was an Inuit woman from Qikiqtaaluk, in the northernmost regions of modern-day Canada, who in 1768 was brought to England as a captive. The British governor of Newfoundland, Hugh Palliser, hoped to impress her with the lavish lifestyles of the English upper classes – she was the latest in a long line of tattooed people from the Americas who travelled to Europe since the 16th century. If Mikak was as awed by what she saw in England as Palliser intended, she may be a useful diplomatic envoy of sorts, able to convince members of her community back home that trading with the English was preferable to resisting colonial efforts.

Praised for her intelligence and grace, Mikak met Queen Charlotte, went to the theatre, and sat with her infant son for a portrait by John Russell, which was then exhibited in the first Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1769. Like all Inuit women in her time, her face was tattooed in the traditional manner, and the spidery blue lines in her skin are clearly visible in the painting.

In the subsequent centuries, many writers and scholars asserted that tattooing was unknown in Europe before Captain James Cook's encounters with the peoples of Pacific islands during his famous voyages. But in Mikak's portrait, her tattooed face would have been seen by the highest echelons of English society in the months before Cook had even first arrived in Tahiti.

Her story, and the fact it had been forgotten as part of the history of tattooing, serves to show how our understanding of the past is a product not just of discovery, but of collective forgetting. As European colonisation gained apace throughout the 19th century, so too did the initial conceptions of tattooing. It was only a few short decades after the Pacific encounters of the 1770s that many writers were boldly claiming that tattooing – which they described as a particularly barbaric practice – had only recently been discovered.

DID YOU KNOW?

HEAD HUNTING

European fascination with the facial tattoos of the Māori in New Zealand led to a macabre trade for their decapitated and preserved heads. They were called *mokomakai*, and fetched high prices among those wanting them as curios.

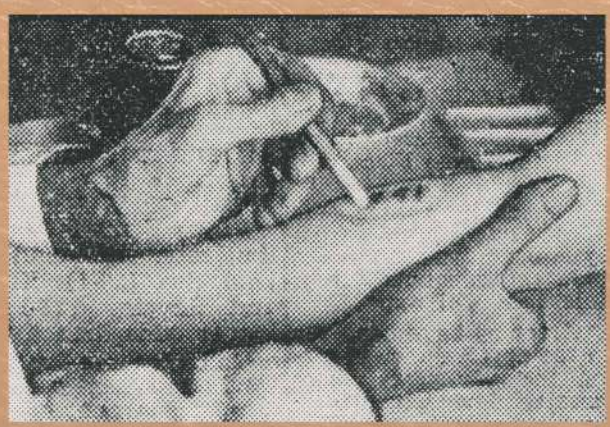
CHARLIE DICK

Tattooing became an act of defiance in a WWII prison camp, until the kommandant got involved

▼ After being captured at Dunkirk in 1940, during World War II, a tattoo artist named Charlie Dick was able to make use of his trade while interred at a Nazi prisoner of war camp in Poland. It earned him extra rations, and kept up morale among the inmates. From his bunk, he tattooed men with symbols of hope and home in return for cigarettes and bread.

Then one day, the brutal kommandant approached Dick with a request of a large custom design, including a Nazi eagle. In his memoirs, Dick wrote graphically of this opportunity to hurt and maim the much-hated kommandant, and gleefully recalled how he selected especially barbed and rusty needles for the job. To his astonishment and disgust, however, the harder he tattooed, the more the kommandant enjoyed it. The man was an unrepentant sadist who relished the pain. It was a risky move, since the German army suppressed tattooing.

As for Dick, he returned to his trade in Northumbria after the war, and even completed unfinished tattoos he had begun in the camp. In the 1970s, a friend wrote to him to say: "Charlie, always remember this: the best people are tattooed." The kommandant would have surely been considered an exception, though.

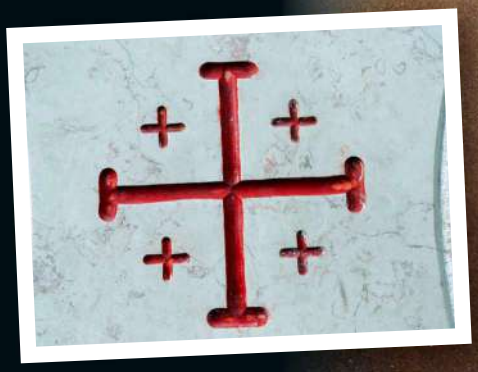


Tattoo artists like London's George Burchett did their best to remove camp numbers from the skin of former PoWs, often without charge

GETTY IMAGES X2; ALAMY X4; DAILY MAIL, 2 MARCH 1948, IMAGE COURTESY MCMASTER UNIVERSITY X1

EDWARD VII

A future king's permanent pilgrimage memento inspired a tattooing boom

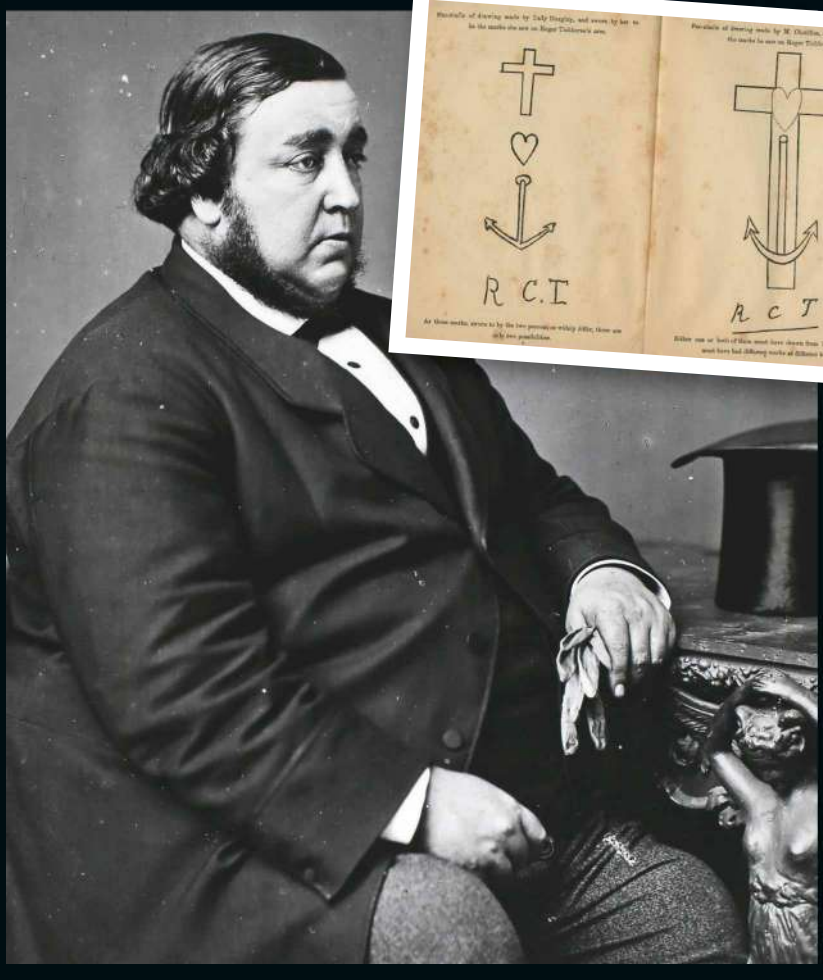


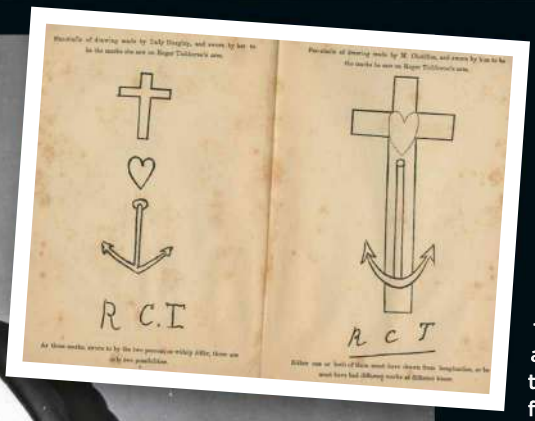
▶ During a pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1862, the Prince of Wales (the future King Edward VII) noted in his diary: "I was tatooed [*sic*] by a Native." Christian travellers to the holy city had been marking the trip with tattoos since the late-16th century, and Bertie, as his family called him, joined in the tradition. He had been sent by Queen Victoria in the aftermath of Prince Albert's death, presumably to encourage the young royal to mature somewhat, but instead he took the opportunity to be marked with a design of several crosses, rather aptly given that he was the future head of the Church of England.

Pilgrimage tattooing, from the early modern period to the time of Bertie's visit, combines both sincere religious devotional practice and something akin to a travel souvenir, permanently acting as a reminder of an important voyage and as a signifier of faith.

Bertie wanted to keep the existence of his tattoo private, but the story came out in 1881 when a French writer happened to visit the same tattooing studio and noticed a framed letter of thanks from the prince. That same year, Edward's sons George (the future George V) and Albert Victor were also both tattooed in Japan – and by the same man who had tattooed their father in Jerusalem. The royal tattoos captured the public imagination and inspired so many people to seek out their own that tattooing quickly became a booming business in England and the United States.

MAIN: **Albert, Prince of Wales, in 1862, the same year of his pilgrimage to Jerusalem and getting his tattoo** INSET: **The Jerusalem Cross, a version of which Bertie had marked on his arm; his sons, however, would have dragons**





ROGER TICHBORNE

A legal *cause célèbre* put tattoos front and centre in order to prove a man's identity

▶ In 1854, the aristocratic scion Roger Tichborne was presumed lost at sea after his ship went down off the coast of Brazil. But then, more than a decade later, he miraculously appeared in Australia. True, he had grown much larger and trauma had caused him to forget key details of his adolescence, including how to speak his mother tongue of French, but he looked set to inherit the family fortune and the Tichborne baronetcy.

Not everyone was convinced, and rival heirs sued him as an imposter. In a dramatic courtroom twist, it was only the absence of Roger's tattoos – that he got while at boarding school – which proved that far from being an amnesiac in line to inherit vast wealth, the re-discovered Roger was in fact a butcher's son from Wapping. In the aftermath of this sensational episode, members of the House of Lords recommended that all peers tattoo their children to stave off any such fraudulent claims in future. ⊙

MAIN: **The man claiming to be Roger Tichborne in order to inherit a fortune, who was undone in court by his lack of tattoos** INSET: **Drawings of two different versions, according to eyewitnesses, of the tattoos that the real Roger Tichborne was known to have on his arms**

DR MATT LODDER is a senior lecturer in art history and theory at the University of Essex. Specialising in the history of tattooing, he is the author of *Painted People: Humanity in 21 Tattoos* (HarperCollins, 2022)

GET HOOKED

LISTEN

Dr Matt Lodder discusses the history of tattooing through the lives and stories of 21 individuals – including some of those featured in this article – on a future episode of the *HistoryExtra* podcast. Find out more at *historyextra.com/podcast*

WHAT IF... ARGENTINA HAD WON THE FALKLANDS WAR?

Dr Martin Farr and **Nige Tassell** consider how the political landscape may have changed had Britain – and Margaret Thatcher – been defeated in 1982

In January 1982, the Conservative Party of prime minister Margaret Thatcher was trailing in third place in the opinion polls, behind the Liberal–SDP Alliance, which stood at 40 per cent, and Labour at 30 per cent. By June of that year, the polls had been turned on their head: Labour were still second, but the Conservatives now had the approval of 51 per cent of the country.

The Falklands War had been fought between these polls, and the events in the South Atlantic, where Britain's naval taskforce had evicted the invading Argentinians in a bloody conflict, transformed Thatcher's political fortunes. As the taskforce sailed home in triumph, her future in Downing Street was assured. The following year, she recorded the biggest landslide victory in a general election since 1945.

But what if the Argentinian military had sent the Royal Navy packing? The popular belief is, after all, that the electoral success of 1983 was all due to the war and that, without the air of triumphalism, the Conservatives would have been on shaky ground heading towards a general election. That belief isn't completely watertight.

DIVIDED OPPOSITION

"Even without a Falklands victory, the re-election of the Conservatives in either 1983 or 1984 was still more likely than not," explains Dr Martin Farr, senior lecturer in contemporary British history at Newcastle University and author of the forthcoming book *Margaret Thatcher's World*. "But, in the event of an Argentinian victory, Thatcher would have resigned immediately and a new leader would still probably have gone on to win, as Harold Macmillan did in 1959 after replacing Anthony Eden, who had been brought down by his own foreign crisis – Suez."

Had Thatcher resigned, her unpopular economic policies may well have been jettisoned by the party. "It would have all depended on when a subsequent leader replaced her. Early on in her premiership, there were few sufficiently senior figures who were so like-minded, but over time, as she transformed the party, there were more. The 1983 general election gave the impregnable base – and a majority that took three elections to erode – but the subsequent election, held in 1987, ensured the effective irreversibility of the revolution."

Had, though, the Conservatives lost the election in either 1983 or 1984, the weakness of Labour and the rise of the Liberal–SDP Alliance would almost certainly have meant no one party taking sole control of government. "It was a uniquely divided electoral opposition. Labour's Michael Foot would still have been the alternative prime minister, as the Alliance was hampered by uncertainty in voters' minds as to whether David Steel, the Liberal leader, or Roy Jenkins, the SDP leader, would be PM. Labour could still rely on its heartlands: in 1983, 28 per cent of votes provided Labour with 209 MPs, while 25 per cent for the Alliance delivered 23. A hung parliament would have been most likely, with some sort of Labour-Alliance agreement – but one probably short of a coalition."

A SELF-INFLICTED WOUND

With Thatcher not in Number 10 – and regardless of which party held the reins of power – the brutality of the 1984–85 miners' strike almost certainly wouldn't have been witnessed. "There had been miners' strikes before, but never one engineered by a government for expressly political purposes. It is

DID YOU KNOW?

THE PEOPLE'S WAR

While the war had its detractors, it received wide support from Britons overall. On 5 April 1982, a poll found that 88 per cent of voters thought Britain had a duty to support the islanders, while 70 per cent said Argentine ships should be sunk if necessary.

IN CONTEXT

In April 1982, the Argentinian military invaded the British-held Falkland Islands, repeating the mission the following day on South Georgia and the Sandwich Islands. The Royal Navy swiftly dispatched a heavy taskforce to the South Atlantic and, after 74 days of bloody conflict that took more than 900 lives, Argentina surrendered. The Argentinian military junta would fall in 1983, the same year that British prime minister Margaret Thatcher went on to record one of the largest electoral victories of recent times. Britain's sovereignty over the Falkland Islands – known as Islas Malvinas in Buenos Aires – is still contested by some people today, more than 40 years later.

Thatcher and Conservative Party chairman Cecil Parkinson celebrate the 1983 general election victory

GETTY IMAGES X4

unlikely that another prime minister would have sought it and, therefore, that such a protracted dispute, where victory was all, would have happened. But the erosion of the sector, with the weakening of the union, would still have occurred, merely over a longer period."

Had Thatcher fallen from power, it would have been a self-inflicted wound. "The greatest irony of the Falklands War is that what became known as a testament to British resolution and strength was occasioned by the absence of either. It was an avoidable conflict. The Argentinian invasion was almost invited by the actions of the British government, including the planned decommissioning of HMS *Endurance*, which had maintained a naval presence in the area. Indeed, had the war taken place even a year later, the chances of British success would have been much lower, following the Nott Defence Review of 1981 that had promised substantial cuts to defence spending."

As Dr Farr observes, the timing of the war had a profound effect on subsequent foreign policy. The British victory "renewed the enthusiasm for hard power in foreign policy. Admiral Sir Henry Leach famously stiffened the prime minister's resolve: if we 'do not achieve complete success, in another few months we shall be living in a different country whose word counts for little'." A failure to reclaim the Falklands would have diminished Britain's standing on the international stage, meaning its place at the forefront of future conflicts in, say, Iraq and Afghanistan wouldn't have necessarily been guaranteed.

The result of the war had profound consequences in South America, too. The Argentinian retention of Islas Malvinas would have strengthened the junta, allowing it to continue its repression of the population. Instead, the British victory hastened its demise, as Dr Farr concludes. "Defeat certainly brought an end to military rule quicker than would otherwise have been the case. After all, what's the point of a military government if it loses wars?"

TOP LEFT: **Marines from the 40 Commando Anti-Tank Troop march towards Port Stanley. 40 Commando was one of the first units ashore during Britain's landings at San Carlos Bay on 21 May 1982**

ABOVE: **A small group of Argentine troops survey the scene after arriving in the Falklands by helicopter**

TOP RIGHT: **Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, Scots Guards celebrate victory at the battle of Mount Tumbledown on 14 June 1982**

"A FAILURE TO RECLAIM THE FALKLANDS WOULD HAVE DIMINISHED BRITAIN'S STANDING ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE"

LISTEN
Helen Parr, professor of modern and contemporary history at Keele University, discusses the Falklands War on the *HistoryExtra* podcast: *historyextra.com/falklands-war-podcast*

NEXT MONTH
What if... Hannibal had taken Rome?

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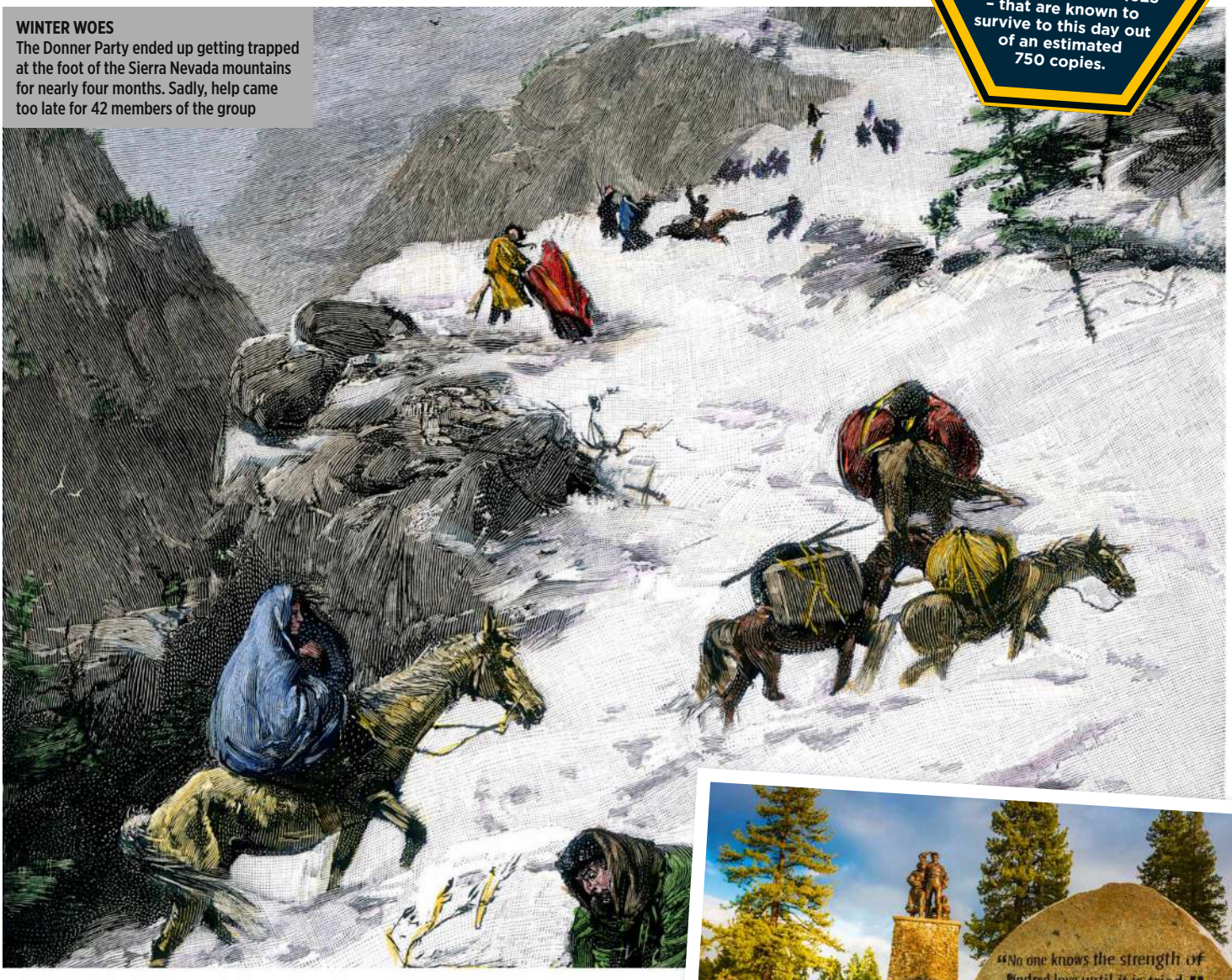
233

The number of First Folios – the inaugural collection of William Shakespeare's plays, published in 1623 – that are known to survive to this day out of an estimated 750 copies.



WINTER WOES
The Donner Party ended up getting trapped at the foot of the Sierra Nevada mountains for nearly four months. Sadly, help came too late for 42 members of the group

What happened to the Donner Party?

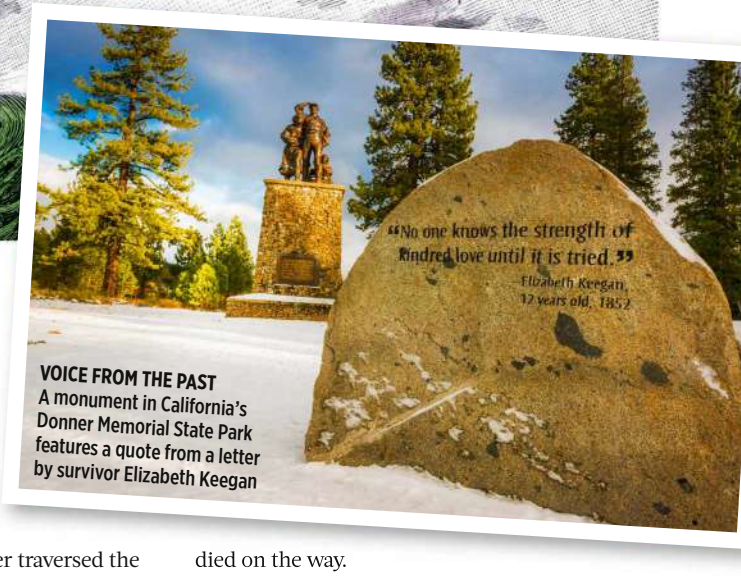
SHORT ANSWER Snowed in and out of food, the pioneers had no choice but to turn to cannibalism

LONG ANSWER The band of American pioneers bound for the frontier – known as the Donner Party after one of its chief families, led by George Donner – set out from Illinois in April 1846. This was where their problems began as it meant joining the well-trod trail from Missouri to California in May, quite late in the migration season.

A man named Lansford Hastings therefore convinced them to take a shortcut he had worked out, despite having never traversed the route and it going over tough terrain not suitable for wagons. The so-called 'Hastings Cutoff' put the party a month behind schedule, which meant they couldn't get over the Sierra Nevada mountain range before being snowed in.

They were stuck for the winter, and helpless when the food ran out and members started perishing due to malnutrition and the cold. When a small group of 15 went for help, eight died on the way.

In the end, after all the animals had been eaten, the survivors resorted to cannibalism. Through such desperate measures, 47 of the 89-strong Donner Party managed to live long enough for one of the multiple rescue expeditions to finally reach them. Despite the tragedy being widely reported in the press, it did little to dissuade future pioneers – especially after the discovery of gold in California not long afterwards.



VOICE FROM THE PAST
A monument in California's Donner Memorial State Park features a quote from a letter by survivor Elizabeth Keegan

ALAMY X2

Why did ships in bottles become popular?

SHORT ANSWER

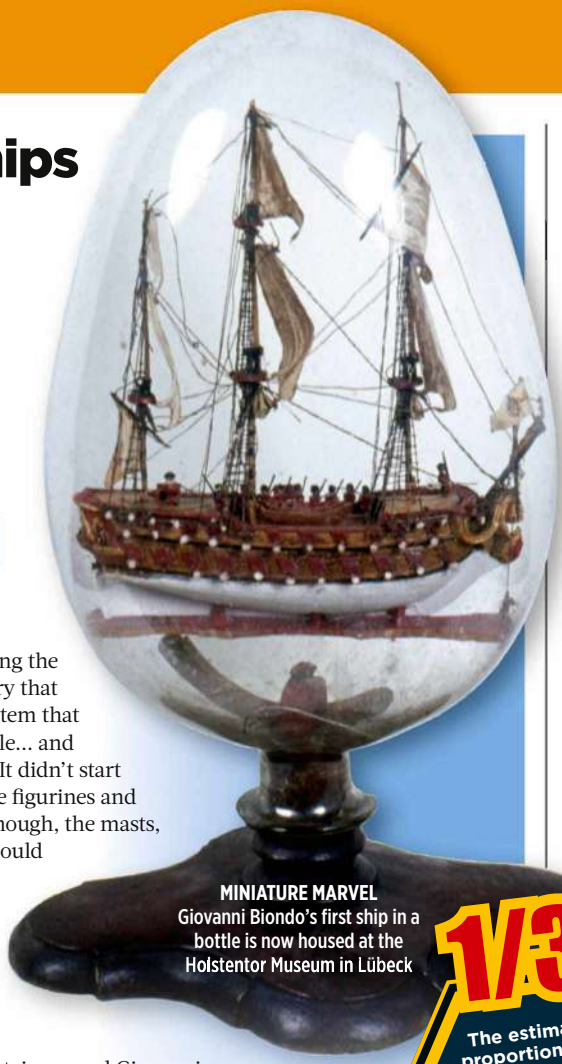
Improvements in glass production encouraged people to fill the containers with all manner of strange things

LONG ANSWER

It was during the 18th century that a trend appeared of taking an item that shouldn't fit inside a glass bottle... and placing it inside a glass bottle. It didn't start with ships, but with things like figurines and puzzles. For a real challenge, though, the masts, rigging and sails of a tall ship could not be beaten.

Despite the romanticised myth, it was unlikely that sailors made the first ships in bottles during their downtime at sea, although the oldest example, from 1784, was the work of a Venetian captain named Giovanni Biondo. His egg-shaped bottle complete with warship (*pictured*) is now owned by a German museum.

A chief reason why the trend took off was due to improvements in glass production. Bottles were easier and cheaper to make, while being thinner and with fewer air bubbles. Seeing what was inside became a novelty, so why not throw in an impossible ship?



MINIATURE MARVEL
Giovanni Biondo's first ship in a bottle is now housed at the Holstentor Museum in Lübeck

1/3
The estimated proportion of all German military deaths during World War II that occurred in the last six months of the fighting, from January to May 1945.

Who was history's deadliest sniper?

SHORT ANSWER

With an average of more than five kills a day, not for nothing was Simo Häyhä known as 'The White Death'

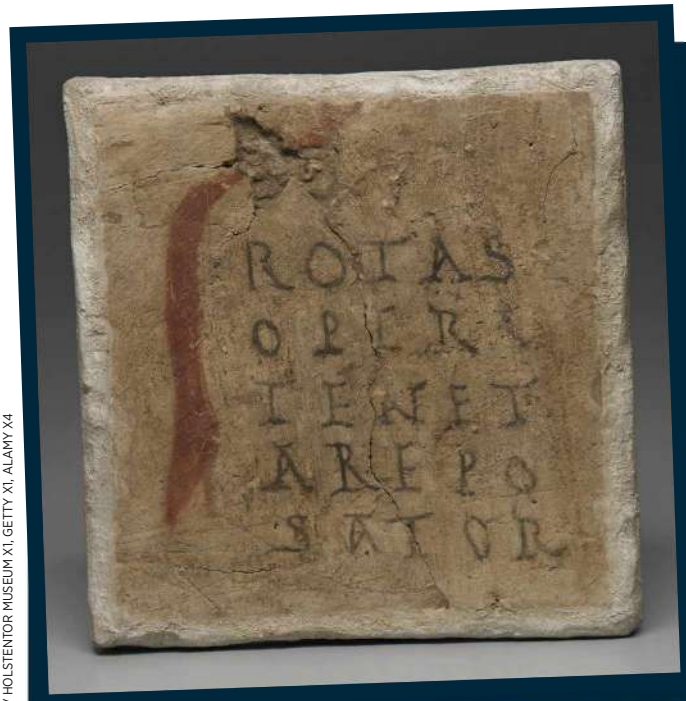
LONG ANSWER

The Winter War of 1939–40 between Finland and the Soviet Union may not be the most recognisable conflict of the 20th century – or those specific years, even – but from it emerged the deadliest sniper in history. Nicknamed 'The White Death', the Finnish sharpshooter Simo Häyhä had at least 505 confirmed kills, a staggering toll given that the war lasted a little over 100 days.

He used a M/28-30 rifle – without a telescopic sight – and was an expert hunter and hider. By pouring water into the ground in front of his weapon, he ensured that the shot would not disrupt the snow and give away his location. The Russians desperately tried to target Häyhä, once ordering a mortar bombardment where they believed him to be. He walked away without a scratch.

Häyhä served for 98 days with 6th Battalion, Infantry Regiment 34, but was eventually wounded by an explosive bullet in the last week of the war. He died in 2002, aged 96.

STONE COLD KILLER
Simo Häyhä became Russia's public enemy number one thanks to his sharpshooting skills



A TRULY PUZZLING DISCOVERY
A Sator Square found in Syria, dating from the second or third centuries AD

How old is the Sator Square?

SHORT ANSWER

The earliest-known examples of the word grid were found among the ruins of Pompeii

LONG ANSWER

Made up of 25 letters in a 5x5 grid, the Sator Square is a five-word palindrome in Latin. The words – Sator, Arepo, Tenet, Opera and Rotas – can be read horizontally and vertically, from the top and left, and bottom and right. With them, it is possible to construct a sentence along the lines of, "The sower Arepo holds the wheels with care (or works the wheels)". Examples have been found all over Europe and beyond, from England to Syria and Sweden to North Africa.

Of course, the square didn't survive so long because of a little story about a farmer called Arepo. It became an important symbol to Christians, possibly because the letters can be rearranged to spell the words *Pater Noster* ('Our Father') twice, with two As and Os left over to stand for Alpha and Omega. But as the earliest-known Sator Squares come from the Pompeii excavations, the puzzle was actually around before Christianity really got going, since the city was destroyed by Mount Vesuvius in AD 79.

FOTOARCHIV HOLSTENTOR MUSEUM X1, GETTY X1, ALAMY X4

ABOVE: **The former Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital in Euston still bears the name of its famous founder, whose portrait is shown left** RIGHT: **Margaret Ann Bulkley qualified as a doctor while living as a man**

Who was the first woman to gain a medical qualification in Britain?

SHORT ANSWER Openly? Elizabeth Garrett Anderson. In secret? Margaret Ann Bulkley, aka James Barry

LONG ANSWER It required a loophole for Elizabeth Garrett Anderson to qualify as a physician in September 1865. The fiercely intelligent young woman had been refused admission at a number of medical schools and universities, and, while working as a nurse at Middlesex Hospital, male medical students had complained when she attended their lectures.

Then Anderson realised something: the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries did not explicitly forbid women from taking their examinations. She passed first time to achieve a licence to practise medicine, and while it was not the same as earning a full medical degree, it did mean her name was added to the Medical Register. Anderson went on to have a glittering career, founding the St Mary's Dispensary for Women and Children in 1866 (later renamed in her honour), before earning her MD at the Sorbonne University in Paris four years later.

But while Anderson was certainly a trailblazer, the first woman to gain a medical qualification in Britain was technically Margaret Ann Bulkley. More than half a century earlier, Bulkley had graduated from the University of Edinburgh Medical School while posing as a man named James Barry – a disguise she maintained for the rest of her life.

DID YOU KNOW?

MEG-A MORTAR

The only surviving mortar from the Civil Wars is Roaring Meg, cast in 1646 for the parliamentarian siege of Goodrich Castle and able to fire gunpowder-filled shells each weighing 85kg. It is still on display at the castle today.

FANGS FOR NOTHING

According to a 1655 book, the village of Pentsch in Silesia (modern Poland) was once harassed by a vampire embodying the spirit of a deceased man named Johannes Cuntius. It sucked animals' blood and had a terrible stench.

KING OF THIEVES

King Farouk of Egypt (r1936–52) was a notorious kleptomaniac. As well as once pardoning a criminal in return for pickpocketing lessons, he also stole Winston Churchill's watch – a family heirloom once owned by the Duke of Marlborough.

WEASEL WORDS

At the debut of Euripides' new tragedy, *Orestes*, in Athens in 408 BC, the main actor Hegelochus was ridiculed when instead of saying "After the storm, I see again a calm sea", he said, "After the storm, I see again a weasel". He never acted again.

What was the point of manicules?

SHORT ANSWER The medieval doodles were an elaborate form of annotation

LONG ANSWER Let's get to the point, much like the name 'manicule' does: Latin for 'little hand', it refers to the pictures of small pointing hands that can be found sketched in the margins of medieval manuscripts. Much like markings made by a highlighter pen, they draw attention to specific lines and paragraphs.

The manicule – also known by a host of other names, like the 'digit', 'indicationum' or 'bishop's fist' – first came into widespread use around the 12th century and, as any reader with a writing tool could add one, they came in all shapes and sizes. Some artists added sleeves, while others made the index finger extra long – not dissimilar to the fingers of cinematic alien ET. Bizarrely, the Italian scholar Petrarch drew his manicules with a thumb and five fingers.

Who was Teutobochus?

SHORT ANSWER A barbarian giant or an archaeological hoax?

LONG ANSWER In 1613, a stunning discovery was made in France. Inside a long-lost tomb were the bones of a giant man, 25 feet tall and with teeth "the size of an ox's foot". The skeleton was said to be that of Teutobochus, a legendary second-century BC king of the Teutons who took on the Romans, and went on display as proof of an ancient race of giants. Not everyone was convinced. French anatomist Jean Riolan the Younger believed the bones to be that of an elephant, perhaps even one of Hannibal's. He wasn't far off: later research concluded they belonged to a prehistoric creature like a mastodon or Deinotherium.

STRANGE STATE OF AFFAIRS
A panoramic view of Cospaia, which is now part of the modern Italian *comune* of San Giustino

What was the Republic of Cospaia?

SHORT ANSWER A tiny anarchist state that only came into existence thanks to an administrative error

LONG ANSWER At a couple of kilometres long and 500 metres wide, and never having a population more than a few hundred, the Republic of Cospaia was a tiny state in central Italy. And it never should have existed. It was created in 1441 when a small strip of land was accidentally excluded from documents concerning the sale of territory between Pope Eugene IV and the Republic of Florence, and its inhabitants declared themselves independent. Thankfully no one seemed too bothered, and in 1484, Florence and the Papal States officially recognised the republic after realising it would be too much hassle to redraw the borders.

Cospaia had its own flag, but no formal government, legal system, army, police, prisons or taxes. It did, however, have a monopoly on tobacco cultivation, making it a surprisingly successful state. This helped the accidental republic to survive for nearly four centuries, before being taken over by the Papal States and Tuscany in 1826.

600
The acres of land that Pennsylvania sect leader Peter Armstrong deeded to God in 1860. The authorities later forced Armstrong to sell the land because the Almighty had not paid his property tax.

Who was the shortest-serving British PM?

SHORT ANSWER Move over, George Canning. As of 2022 we have a new winner

LONG ANSWER There is no getting away from the obvious: a few months ago, this question had a different answer. Now, Liz Truss holds the unwanted honour as the British prime minister with the shortest tenure in 10 Downing Street, resigning after a mere 44 days in the job. That more than halved the previous record of 119 days, held by George Canning. A Tory, he became PM on 10 April 1827 – beating political heavyweights Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington – but he lost his battle with long-term health issues and died on 8 August.

At the other end of the scale is Sir Robert Walpole, who is generally regarded as the first PM of the lot. He lasted a total of 7,614 days, or almost 21 years.

OUT OF OFFICE MESSAGE
Liz Truss (*above*) served just 44 days as prime minister, beating a 'record' previously set by George Canning (*right*)

INTIMATE DISPLAY
A visitor to London's Tate Gallery spends a quiet moment observing Auguste Rodin's iconic sculpture *The Kiss* in 1955

How long have humans been kissing?

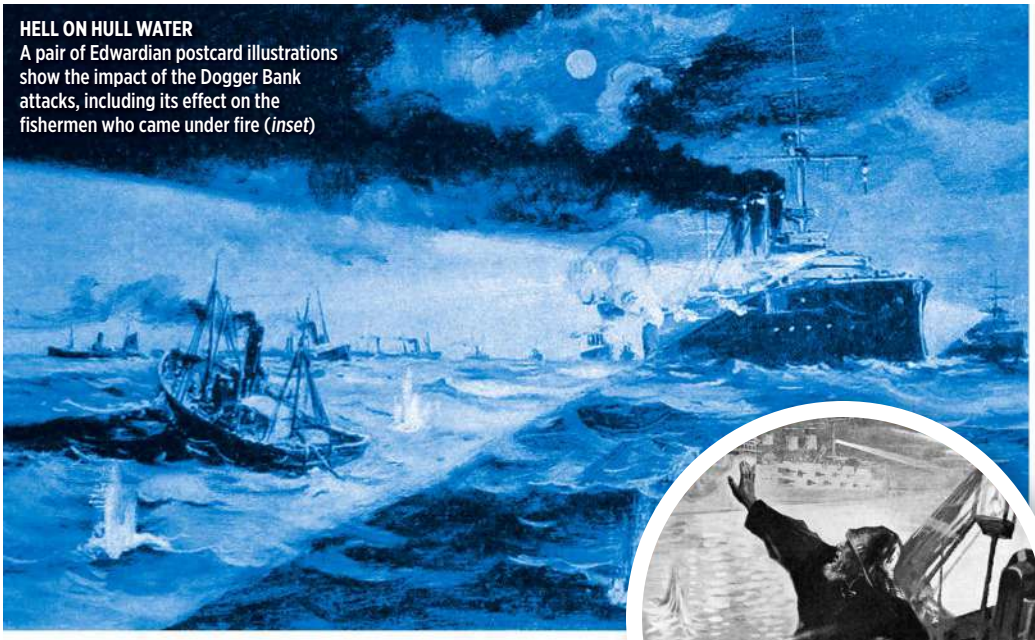
SHORT ANSWER Around 3,500 years, according to the records. They're going to be some pretty chapped lips...

LONG ANSWER There is a BIG gap between the time humans began kissing and when there is recorded evidence of it. The act goes back to our prehistoric ancestors, possibly developed as an extension of when mothers pre-chewed food and fed their babies from their mouths, or it could be that kissing is just innate. It is seen in primates as well as humans, after all.

The earliest-known reference, however, comes from the *Vedas*, a collection of religious texts from ancient India written in Vedic Sanskrit around 3,500 years ago. The texts mention a custom of rubbing noses together.

Kissing, which then moved to the lips, spread from India, probably thanks to Alexander the Great's armies, but it was the Romans who really got Europe smooching. They had different kinds of kiss: the *osculum* (a peck on the cheek), the *basium* (lip kissing) and the *savium* (essentially, what we would now describe as French kissing).

GETTY IMAGES X4, ALAMY X4



HELL ON HULL WATER
A pair of Edwardian postcard illustrations show the impact of the Dogger Bank attacks, including its effect on the fishermen who came under fire (*inset*)

What was the Dogger Bank Incident?

SHORT ANSWER A brief naval engagement in the Russo-Japanese War... no, actually a total naval blunder

LONG ANSWER Throughout 1904, war raged between the Russians and Japanese over their respective expansionist aims in East Asia, when one night the fighting spread to the waters off Britain. As the Baltic fleet made its way across the North Sea on 21 October, en route to the Suez Canal, the Russians spotted a force of Japanese torpedo boats in the fog, and opened fire.

Except, the enemy was nowhere to be seen: they had actually seen a fleet of English fishing trawlers heading out of Hull. But the crews were reckless – this wasn't even the first time they had fired without checking to see who they were aiming at.

Two fishermen were killed in the resulting frenzy and many more were injured, with one trawler sunk and four others damaged. Such was the chaos of the 'battle' that a Russian ship was accidentally hit by friendly fire. The so-called Dogger Bank Incident almost sparked a war with Britain, which was only prevented by the Russians making an immediate apology and paying £66,000 in compensation.

As for the actual Russo-Japanese War, here's a clue to who eventually won in September 1905: if the Russians couldn't even take out some British fishermen, how do you think they fared against the Japanese?

How old is the phrase 'damsel in distress?'

SHORT ANSWER The trope of a princess in dire need of rescue dates back to antiquity, but the phrase is medieval in origin

LONG ANSWER Whether it's Andromeda chained to a rock, Rapunzel locked in a tower, or Lois Lane always needing rescuing by Superman, the damsel in distress is a well-worn archetype in storytelling.

The future of the trope is uncertain – with some arguing it is due for retirement for its retrograde depiction of helpless women reliant on men – but the phrase itself stems from the French language. Damsel is a corruption of the word *Demoiselle*, meaning 'young lady', and it is often found in medieval chivalric songs and folk tales. However, the full phrase didn't show up in English until 1692, when it was used in Richard Ames' poem *Sylvia's Complaint of Her Sexes Unhappiness*.

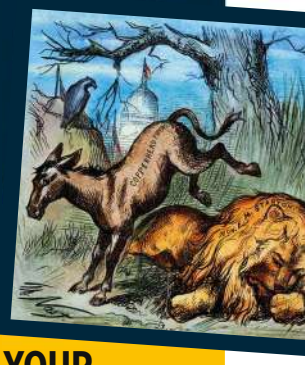
HOLDING OUT FOR A HERO
Andromeda's dramatic rescue by Perseus is an early example of the 'damsel in distress' trope

Why is the US Democratic Party logo a donkey?

SHORT ANSWER First things first: it isn't actually the party's official logo

LONG ANSWER It seems to be a gift for Republicans for the Democrats to go around with an ass as their party's symbol, but undercutting the opposition was the reason the donkey was chosen in the first place. When Andrew Jackson's political rivals started calling him 'jackass' – in reference to his surname – he embraced the insult and used a donkey on campaign posters in the 1828 presidential election. It clearly didn't hurt him, as he ended up winning.

The political cartoonist Thomas Nast popularised using the animal to symbolise the party as a whole, starting with an 1870 illustration for *Harper's Weekly* (*pictured*), in which a donkey kicks a lion representing the late Republican politician Edwin Stanton. The donkey, however, is not the Democrats' official logo – they have a more sensible-looking 'D' inside a blue circle.



KICKING ASS
The Dems were first depicted as a donkey in this cartoon by Thomas Nast

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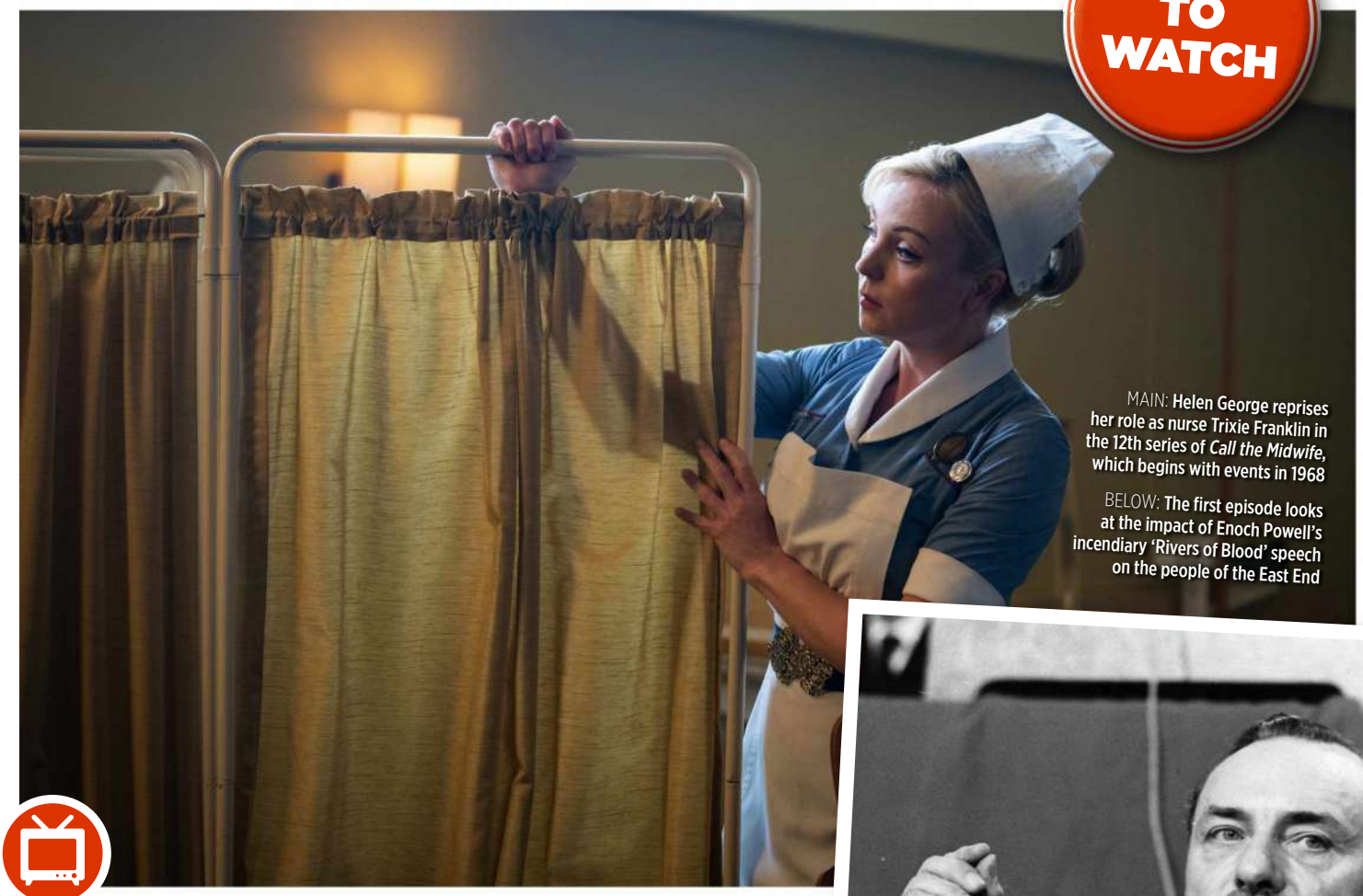
ONE TO WATCH



MAIN: Helen George reprises her role as nurse Trixie Franklin in the 12th series of *Call the Midwife*, which begins with events in 1968

BELOW: The first episode looks at the impact of Enoch Powell's incendiary 'Rivers of Blood' speech on the people of the East End

NEAL STREET PRODUCTIONS-OLLY COURTENAY X1, GETTY X1

This woman's work

Call the Midwife / BBC One, January

Perhaps because its annual Christmas special has become a fixture of Yuletide programming, *Call the Midwife* has a reputation among some viewers as being undemanding fare. Or perhaps this perception is down to plain old sexism. Begging the forgiveness of Stephen McGann's Dr Patrick Turner, this is a drama that focuses primarily on women's experiences rather than manly goings-on.

Without suggesting that every moment of every episode is an exercise in gritty social realism, it's also a show that's unafraid to tackle big issues – including the grinding effects of poverty, alcoholism, abortion and the Thalidomide scandal. The new and 12th series is a case in point, in that it begins in 1968. This was the year when Enoch Powell gave his infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech, in which the then Conservative MP, a man many thought could have led his party, railed against immigration.

The first episode in the new series deals directly with the aftermath of the speech by dramatising the admiration that all too many had for Powell, including in Poplar and the East End of London more generally, a matter of historical record. The MP's admirers include a group of dockers, who decide to march on parliament in his support. For Jamaica-born Lucille (Leonie Elliott) and her husband, Cyril (Zephryn Taitte), this overt display of racism is particularly disquieting.

Elsewhere, in a show that has regularly refreshed the cast, there's the introduction of a new character at Nonnatus House in Sister Veronica (Rebecca Gethings), a recently qualified health visitor. She's bright and energetic, so what's not to like? Best ask Nurse Crane (Linda Bassett), who for some reason has a low opinion of health visitors.

As for the other characters, we rejoin Trixie (Helen George) and Nancy (Megan Cusack) to find them offering terminal care to an elderly lady. Plus Trixie steels herself to meet Fiona's parents.

WEEKLY TV & RADIO
Visit ***historyextra.com*** for updates on upcoming TV and radio programmes

The 10th series of *Digging for Britain* will see Professor Alice Roberts showcase more exciting discoveries from across the UK

A view of Moscow's iconic Red Square, with Saint Basil's Cathedral on the left and the Spasskaya Tower to the right. Misha Glenny's new series for BBC Radio 4 dissects the Russian capital's long and complex history

Small city, big ideas

The Invention of Russia / BBC Radio 4, starts Monday 9 January

How did Moscow grow to become the capital of the world's largest country? It's a question grappled with by the broadcaster Misha Glenny in the latest iteration of BBC Radio 4's 'Invention' strand, in which, to quote the show's website, he "investigates the borders, the histories and the people that make different nations what they are".

The four-part series introduces listeners to pre-medieval and medieval Moscow at a time when it was just one of a number of settlements competing for regional primacy. There was, according Glenny (a Russia expert whose book *McMafia* was the inspiration for the hit TV drama), and his producer, Miles Warde, happenstance in what happened. It wasn't inevitable that Moscow should have become more important, for example, than Novgorod, capital of a republic that once extended from the Gulf of Finland to the Urals.

But however it came about, Moscow's rulers created a highly centralised system of government, most notably after Ivan the Terrible (1530–84) established the Tsardom of Russia. Especially under the Romanovs, which became Russia's ruling dynasty in 1613, the tsars, as head of both state and church, would wield enormous power. Russian rulers used this to fight wars with European neighbours and, by the late 17th century, to extend Russia's territory far to the east into Siberia.

However, Russia's history is not just expansionist. Without natural barriers to stop interlopers entering its lands, this is a country, Glenny contends, that was preoccupied with the threat of invasion long before German tanks rolled into the USSR in 1941.

The four-part series will also tell the story of Ivan the Terrible, depicted here after capturing the city of Kazan in 1552

Learn more about the history of Russia's expansionist ambitions with our Essential Guide to the Crimean War, which begins on page 27

Can you dig it?

Digging for Britain / BBC Two and BBC iPlayer, starts Sunday 1 January

Professor Alice Roberts returns to front the 10th series of the show that offers viewers a glimpse of the latest archaeological work around the country. Highlights this time around include a dig at a Northamptonshire field that has yielded Anglo-Saxon gold so spectacular that it rivals anything you might see in a museum.

Among other highlights, we are also promised new insights into Roman Britain. Not only has a lost Roman town recently been found north of London, but archaeologists in Cornwall have been exploring the site of the most westerly Roman fort ever located on these islands.

The series also eavesdrops on the first ever excavation of Arthur's Stone, a neolithic site in Herefordshire. As ever with this series, many of the best moments come when the archaeologists themselves capture discoveries with their 'Dig Diary' cameras.

Emma Corrin and Jack O'Connell turn up the temperature in the new Netflix adaptation of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*

GETTY X1, ALAMY X1, BBC PICTURES X2, PARISA TAGHIZADEH/NETFLIX © 2022 X1, ITV X2

Missing, presumed dead

Stonehouse / ITV1, January

The story of John Stonehouse (1925–88) is one that seems too fantastic to be true. On 20 November 1974, the Labour MP for Walsall North left a pile of his clothes near the water while on holiday in Miami Beach. The intention was to fool people that he had drowned or even been taken by a shark and, despite the lack of a corpse, obituaries were published.

In fact, Stonehouse was on his way to Australia under an assumed identity, where he hoped to begin a new life – one that would enable him to leave both his marriage and severe financial problems behind. But things didn't quite work out. In December 1974, he was arrested by the police in Melbourne. Officers asked him to take down his trousers so they could see if he was Lord Lucan (who had recently vanished after allegedly murdering his children's nanny) by checking whether he had a scar on his right thigh.

Despite these kinds of details and plenty of other revelations that have entered the public domain over the years, notably over his spying for the Czech Secret Service, Stonehouse remains an enigmatic figure. Leaving aside his financial woes, why did he embark on such a hare-brained course of action?

Penned by first-time screenwriter John Preston, whose books include *A Very English Scandal*, the story of Jeremy Thorpe's fall from grace and the basis for the BBC drama, *Stonehouse* should shed new light on what happened. The series stars the real-life couple Matthew Macfadyen and Keeley Hawes as Stonehouse and his wife, Barbara.

Succession star Matthew Macfadyen, pictured right and below, stars in ITV1's new drama series about disgraced Labour MP John Stonehouse

Class action

Lady Chatterley's Lover / Netflix, streaming now

It was in 1960, 30 years after the death of DH Lawrence (1885–1930), that Penguin Books published a "complete and unexpurgated" version of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. The novel, sexually explicit and peppered with four-letter words, was almost immediately at the centre of a famous obscenity trial. However, this has arguably done the novel a disservice, because the book is among Lawrence's key works: a piece of literature that deals with the aftermath of war, dashed hopes, and the personal cost of challenging what other people think you should do.

This new adaptation stars Emma Corrin (Princess Diana in the fourth series of *The Crown*) as Lady Connie Chatterley, whose marriage to Sir Clifford (Matthew Duckett) begins to fall apart after he returns from World War I paralysed from the waist down. Connie embarks on an affair with the gamekeeper at the couple's vast Wragby estate, Oliver Mellows (Jack O'Connell).

Directed by Laure de Clermont-Tonnerre, it's a film that certainly doesn't shy away from the sex of the novel. But neither does it come across as voyeuristic or – a real risk with adapting such a text – melodramatic. Instead, the relationship between Connie and Mellows is the starting point for an exploration of sensuality, love and, underpinning the story, hypocrisy linked to snobbery and privilege.

Finding Albion

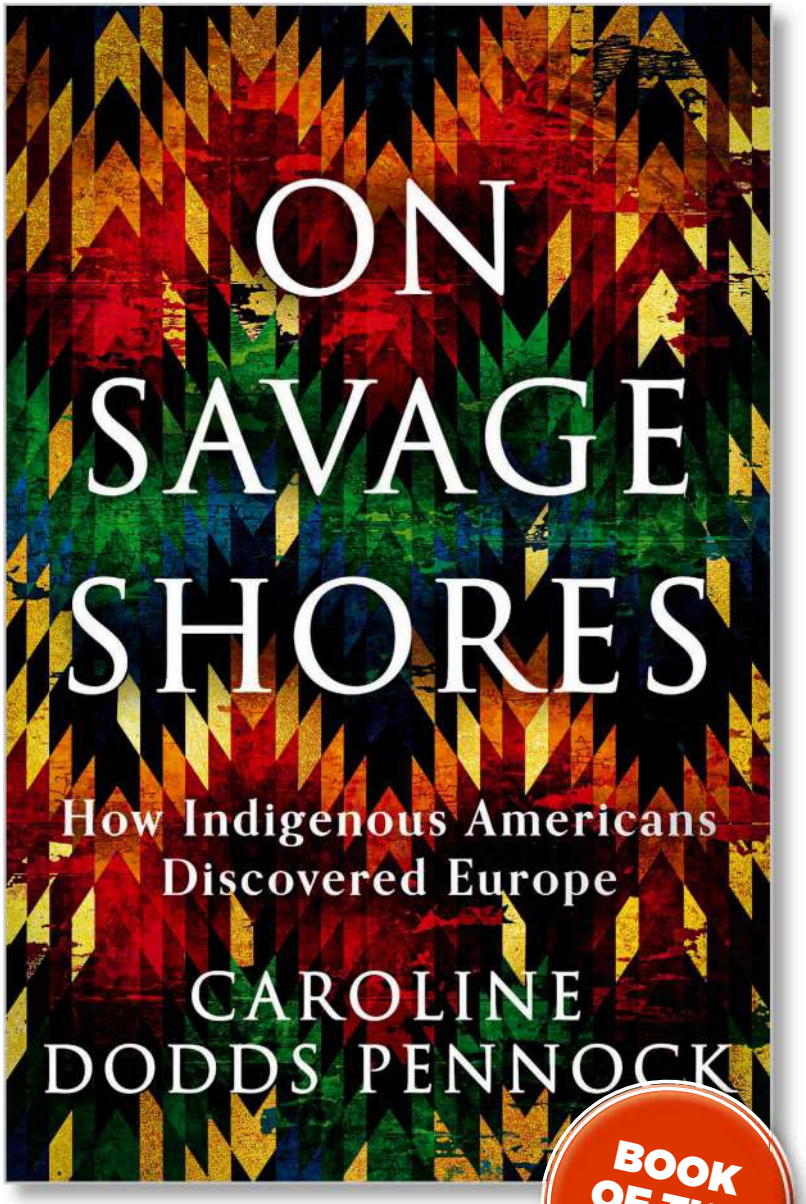
Detectorists / BBC Two and BBC iPlayer, December

Joy. Five years after the end of the third series, Mackenzie Crook's acutely observed comedy, which has more to say about a kind of understated English mysticism over links to the past than any number of academic tracts, returns for a feature-length episode.

We rejoin Andy (Crook) and Lance (Toby Jones), shown below, at a time when the future of the Danebury Metal Detecting Club is under threat. Then Lance gets permission to search 10 acres of hitherto unexplored land, where he uncovers a mysterious old relic.

BOOKS & PODCASTS

THIS MONTH'S BEST HISTORICAL READS AND LISTENS



On Savage Shores: How Indigenous Americans Discovered Europe

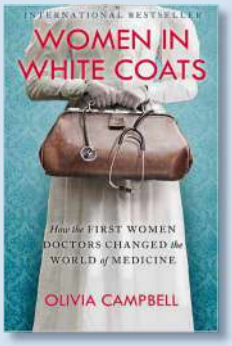
By Caroline Dodds Pennock
W&N, £22, hardback, 320 pages

The arrival of Europeans in the Americas – and the often significant destruction that it wrought on their lives and societies – has been much chronicled. This fascinating book inverts that focus, examining instead the experiences of indigenous Americans who arrived in Europe during the 15th and 16th centuries. Of these thousands of individuals, many were sold into slavery in Spain and Portugal, but others started new lives in England, Germany and the Netherlands. Their impressions, it's fair to say, were not always positive.

Women in White Coats: How the First Women Doctors Changed the World of Medicine

by Olivia Campbell
Swift Press, £14.99, hardback, 368 pages

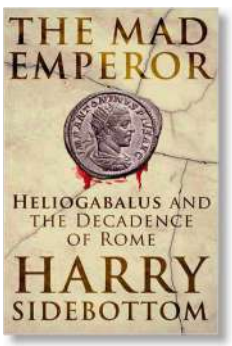
Women had played key roles in medicine and healthcare for centuries but, by the start of the Victorian era, had been sidelined by a male-dominated profession. Driven both by personal loss and a determination to challenge this discrimination head on, three key figures – Elizabeth Blackwell, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson and Sophia Jex-Blake – fought to challenge the system. As this powerful book charts, their efforts reshaped their careers and those of generations of women to come.

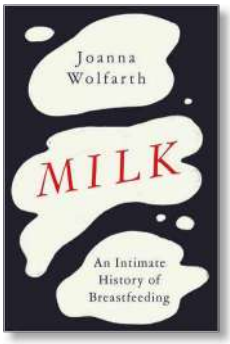

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER
WOMEN IN WHITE COATS
How the FIRST WOMEN DOCTORS CHANGED the WORLD of MEDICINE
OLIVIA CAMPBELL

The Mad Emperor: Heliogabalus and the Decadence of Rome

By Harry Sidebottom
Oneworld, £20, hardback, 352 pages

The third-century AD Roman emperor Heliogabalus caused a huge stir during his short reign, inviting accusations of depravity, religious zealotry and sexuality deemed to be immoral. Historian and novelist Harry Sidebottom's suitably lively biography sets out to separate fact from fiction, deploying a range of historical detective techniques in a bid to reveal the real ruler. It's fascinating both on the man himself and the time in which he lived, particularly its attitudes towards political power, ethnicity, sexuality and gender.





Milk: An Intimate History of Breastfeeding

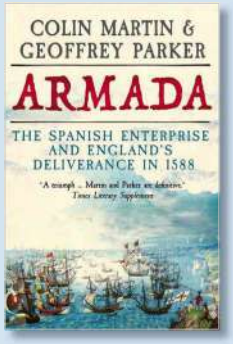
By Joanna Wolfarth
W&N, £18.99, hardback, 304 pages

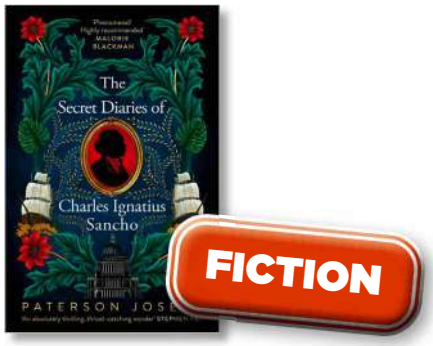
This blend of history and personal memoir explores the central role of breastfeeding – and the relationship between babies and caregivers – across centuries and cultures. It's a diverse affair, taking in everything from ancient icons of motherhood and Renaissance views of the sanctity of milk, to Victorian medical manuals and trips to the 21st-century maternity ward. Along the way, it follows the changes in technology, society and politics that have contributed to the ways in which we see carers, children and gender roles today.

Armada: The Spanish Enterprise and England's Deliverance in 1588

By Colin Martin and Geoffrey Parker
Yale, £30, hardback, 768 pages

In May 1588, King Philip II launched a fleet whose name, and aim, has become the stuff of legend: the Spanish Armada had no lesser goal than the invasion of England. But how close did it come to toppling the Tudor dynasty? And was the weather really the key factor in its failure? This updated version of a book first published all the way back in 1988 draws on the latest maritime and archival discoveries to tackle those, and other pressing questions about one of history's most famous naval clashes.





The Secret Diaries of Charles Ignatius Sancho

By Paterson Joseph
Dialogue Books, £16.99, hardback, 432 pages

Actor Paterson Joseph – who you may know from roles in everything from *Peep Show* to the BBC's adaptation of Malorie Blackman novel *Noughts + Crosses* – here brings his storytelling skills to the world of historical fiction. It's a fictionalised retelling of the life of Ignatius Sancho, in which the 18th-century campaigner and writer chronicles his remarkable escape from slavery, his pivotal role in the abolition movement, and his social rise to rub shoulders with musicians, members of parliament and monarchs alike.

PODCAST WHAT TO LISTEN TO...

Each month we bring you three of our favourite podcasts from the BBC and HistoryExtra

The Cuban Missile Crisis: World on the Brink

bit.ly/CubanPod116

This new *HistoryExtra* series charts the escalating tensions that saw the US and the Soviet Union reach the brink of nuclear disaster in 1962. Drawing on expert insight to reveal the key players, historical faultlines and strategic missteps that almost led to catastrophe, it's a dramatic deep-dive into a terrifying chapter in international relations.

Writing the history of the modern monarchy

bit.ly/CrownPod116

The fifth season of *The Crown* was one of 2022's big hits, with commentators debating whether its plotlines offered fair depictions of real life. But how straightforward is it to tell the recent story of the British monarchy? Expert historian Professor Philip Murphy shares his insider secrets, and reveals why it might be more difficult than you'd expect.

The Rest is History: Alfred the Great

bit.ly/AlfredPod116

Legal reformer, lover of poetry, stalwart defender against the Vikings: Alfred the Great was a man of many and diverse facets. This two-part podcast series from historians Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook explores them in depth, painting an engaging portrait of a man who battled against the odds to create a fair, peaceful kingdom.

ALAMY X1

EVENTS & EXHIBITIONS

WHAT TO SEE AND WHERE TO VISIT IN THE WIDER WORLD OF HISTORY

Beatty's medical chest (*right*), likely present on board HMS *Victory* during the battle of Trafalgar, offers a glimpse into the types of tools that naval surgeons had at their disposal

MUST SEE

SOUTH WEST HERITAGE TRUST AND SOMERSET COUNTY COUNCIL 2022 X1, GETTY X1

EXHIBITION

Blood and Battle: Dissecting the Life of William Beatty

A new display at the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich is marking 200 years since the renowned naval surgeon Sir William Beatty was appointed physician to the Royal Hospital for Seamen. Open until March, the exhibition enables visitors to immerse themselves in a reproduction of HMS *Victory*'s cockpit and experience the grisly sights, sounds and smells of a nautical medical bay. It also showcases a replica of Lord Nelson's life mask, Beatty's medical chest, and a range of surgical instruments used to treat those maimed in battle during the 18th and 19th centuries.

PAID ENTRY Old Royal Naval College, London, until 25 March 2023, *ornc.org*

EVENT

Travelling Through Time: A Lost Edinburgh

In association with his exhibition *Edinburgh: A Lost World*, this free lecture at the City Art Centre will see photographer Ron O'Donnell discussing the camera's ability to preserve lost or disappearing locations. As perhaps expected, a key theme will be the lure of nostalgia for aspects of the Scottish capital that no longer exist.

FREE ENTRY City Art Centre, Edinburgh, 2pm, 14 January 2023, *edinburghmuseums.org.uk/venue/city-art-centre*

EXHIBITION

BBC 100 in Wales

National Museum Cardiff is inviting visitors to explore the history of Welsh broadcasting in a new exhibition marking the BBC's recent centenary. Packed with props, costumes and archive footage from the vaults, the display not only invites guests to share their TV and radio memories from the past, but think about the BBC's future as it heads into a new century.

FREE ENTRY National Museum Cardiff, until 16 April 2023, *museum.wales/cardiff*

EXHIBITION

In Fashion

From christening gowns to military uniforms, this new display at the Museum of Somerset reveals how the garments in people's wardrobes have been determined by wider trends in history. Some of items have a specifically local focus, such as the wedding dress seen here, made in Taunton in 1910.

FREE ENTRY Museum of Somerset, Taunton, until 18 March 2023, *swheritage.org.uk*

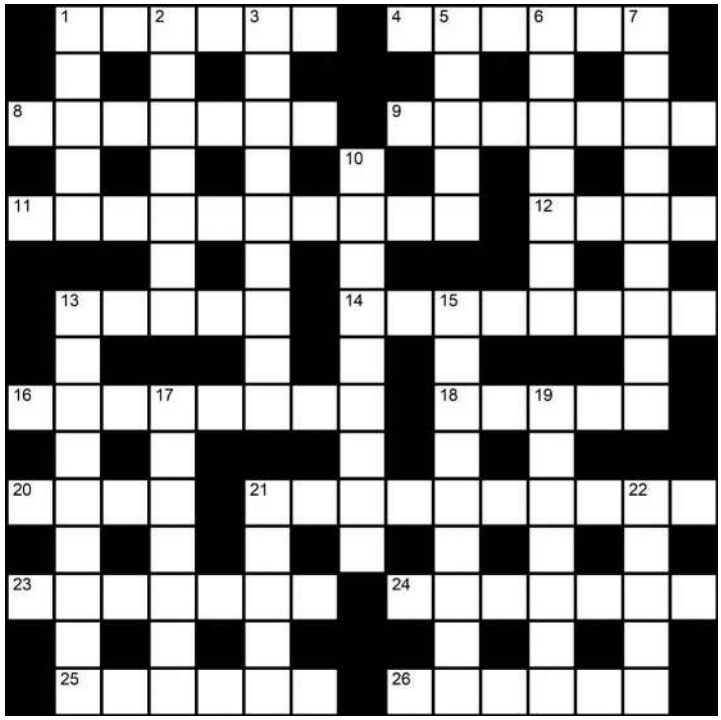
CROSSWORD

TEST YOURSELF WITH OUR HISTORICAL PUZZLE EVERY ISSUE

Test your history knowledge to solve our prize puzzle – and you could win a fantastic new book

ACROSS

1 See 1 Down
4 King of Macedonia in the fourth century BC (6)
8 Textile industry activist of the 19th century (7)
9 ___ play, biblical drama of medieval Europe (7)
11 Popular dance of the 1920s (10)
12 1847 novel of the South Seas by Herman Melville (4)
13 Jack ___, 17th-century English executioner (5)
14 Knight of the Round Table (8)
16 1950 film by Akira Kurosawa (8)
18 Asian capital formerly known as Edo (5)
20 Heroine in Arthurian legend (4)
21 Type of satire that became popular in Europe during the 16th century (10)
23 Historic city in Rajasthan (7)
24 Very old (7)
25 Damon ___ (1880–1946), US newspaperman and comic writer (6)
26 Welsh brewery founded in 1882 (6)



Set by Richard Smyth

DOWN

1/1A Nickname for the 1st United States Volunteer Cavalry in the Spanish-American War of 1898 (5,6)
2 See 22 Down
3 Town in South Yorkshire, formerly known for glass-making and flour-milling (9)
5 Franz Joseph ___ (1732–1809), renowned Austrian composer (5)
6 Benjamin Henry ___ (1764–1820), US Capitol architect (7)
7 Benin city, formerly a major slave-trading port (5-4)
10 Communist ideology in force in the USSR from 1924 (9)
13 Russian city, founded as a Cossack fortress in the 1790s (9)
15 Leader of an 1831 rebellion by enslaved people in Virginia (3,6)
17 Roman emperor from AD 117 to 138 (7)
19 Raft sailed across the Pacific by Thor Heyerdahl in 1947 (3-4)
21 Ancient Greek god of the Underworld (5)
22/2 French philosopher and writer (1713–84), chief editor of the *Encyclopédie* (5,7)

CHANCE TO WIN

BOOK WORTH £20 FOR THREE WINNERS

Mr Horniman's Walrus
by Clare Paterson

HOW TO ENTER

Post entries to **BBC History Revealed, January 2023 Crossword, PO Box 501, Leicester, LE94 0AA** or email them to **january2023@historyrevealedcomps.co.uk** by noon on **1 February 2023**.

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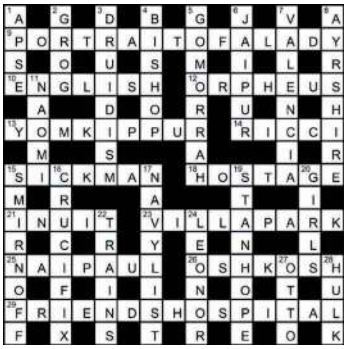

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··· ON SALE 19 JANUARY ···

THE BLACK DEATH

Discover what it was like to live in the shadow of the plague – from efforts to contain and cure the disease, to its devastating impact on families and communities

PLUS... TOP 10 HISTORICAL STATUS SYMBOLS THE REAL ROBINSON CRUSOE **PAULI MURRAY: HUMAN RIGHTS CHAMPION** NINE THINGS YOU (PROBABLY) DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT LONDON'S FIRST ZEPPELIN ATTACK **WHAT IF... HANNIBAL HAD TAKEN ROME?** AND MORE...

CROSSWORD WINNERS

The three lucky winners of the prize crossword in issue 113 are as follows:

A Emery, Essex
I Smellie, Surrey
J Wells, Lincolnshire

Congratulations! You've each won a copy of *When There Were Birds* by Roy and Lesley Adkins.

We will post your prizes out as soon as possible.

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GETTY IMAGES

PHOTO FINISH

ARRESTING IMAGES FROM THE ANNALS OF THE PAST

COLD FRONT 1917

By the time this photograph of two Belgian soldiers had been taken in early 1917, the Yser Front had remained largely static since the outbreak of World War I in the summer of 1914. Located in Belgium, the front connected the Ypres Salient (a fiercely fought-over combat zone) and the country's coast, with Germans and Belgians dug in on either side of the Yser River and Canal. The area was prone to flooding, so instead of the more typical trenches dug out of the mud, the front was fortified by breastworks and sandbag walls to hold back the water. The conditions were just as brutal, though – and the winters just as unforgiving.

GETTY IMAGES

This was Sylvia's promise to you...

A generation ago, a woman named Sylvia made a promise. As a doctor's secretary, she'd watched stroke destroy the lives of so many people. She was determined to make sure we could all live in a world where we're far less likely to lose our lives to stroke.

She kept her promise, and a gift to the Stroke Association was included in her Will. Sylvia's gift helped fund the work that made sure many more of us survive stroke now than did in her lifetime.

Sylvia changed the story for us all. Now it's our turn to change the story for those who'll come after us.

Stroke still shatters lives and tears families apart. And for so many survivors the road to recovery is still long and desperately lonely. If you or someone you love has been affected by stroke – you'll know just what that means.

But it doesn't have to be like this. You can change the story, just like Sylvia did, with a gift in your Will. All it takes is a promise.

You can promise future generations a world where researchers discover new treatments and surgeries and every single stroke survivor has the best care, rehabilitation and support network possible, to help them rebuild their lives.

Big or small, every legacy gift left to the Stroke Association will make a difference to stroke survivors and their families.

Find out how by calling 020 7566 1505
or email legacy@stroke.org.uk
or visit stroke.org.uk/legacy

Rebuilding lives after stroke

The Stroke Association is registered as a charity in England and Wales (No 211015) and in Scotland (SC037789).
Also registered in the Isle of Man (No. 945) and Jersey (NPO 369), and operating as a charity in Northern Ireland.

Stroke Association

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